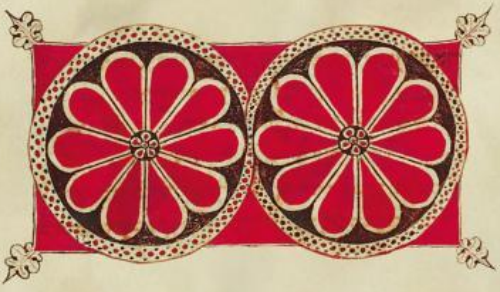
Prayer in the Gospels

A THEOLOGICAL EXEGESIS OF THE IDEAL PRAY-ER



MATHIAS NYGAARD

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A Theological Exegesis of the Ideal Pray-er

By
Mathias Nygaard

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LEIDEN · BOSTON
2012

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Nygaard, Mathias.
Prayer in the Gospels : a theological exegesis of the ideal pray-er / by Mathias Nygaard.
p. cm. — (Biblical interpretation series ; v. 114)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-90-04-23106-1 (alk. paper)
1. Bible. N.T. Gospels—Criticism, interpretation, etc. 2. Prayer—Biblical teaching. I. Title.

BS2555.6.P67N94 2012
226'.06—dc23

2012013135

This publication has been typeset in the multilingual "Brill" typeface. With over 5,100 characters covering Latin, IPA, Greek, and Cyrillic, this typeface is especially suitable for use in the humanities. For more information, please see www.brill.nl/brill-typeface.

ISSN 0928-0731
ISBN 9789004231061 (hardback)
ISBN 9789004230576 (e-book)

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This book is printed on acid-free paper.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This monograph is a revised version of my thesis accepted for the PhD degree at the faculty of Divinity at the University of Aberdeen (2010). As this is the outcome of my studies over many years I remain indebted to a great number of people—more than can be mentioned here. However, out of these I would still like to single out a few. I would like first of all to express my gratitude to my two supervisors, Dr. Simon J. Gathercole and Dr. Tomas Bokedal, for their guidance and the genuine interest they have shown in my work. I would also like to thank the University of Aberdeen for the granting of research funding towards my project. In teaching and seminars at the University of Aberdeen Prof. I. Howard Marshall and Prof. Francis Watson both inspired and challenged me in different ways to attempt a project in biblical theology. I would further like to express my thanks to Fr. Jean Michel Poffet of the *École biblique et archéologique française de Jérusalem* and Prof. Hermann Lichtenberger of the Evangelical Faculty of Theology at the University of Tübingen who both acted as exemplary hosts during my research stays at their institutions. The following have read my work at different stages of completion and provided invaluable feedback: Mr. Scot Becker, Prof. Samuel Byrskog, Doc. Tord Fornberg, Prof. Otfried Hofius, Mr. Daniel Johansson, Mr. Yong-Shin Jung, Dr. Joel Kennedy, Prof. Hermann Lichtenberger, Prof. I. Howard Marshall, Dr. Vijay Pillay, Prof. Kari Syreeni, Mrs. Sharelle Sånglöf, Dr. Justin Taylor S. M., and Dr. Olivier-Thomas Venard O. P. My examiners, Dr. Andrew Clarke and Prof. John Nolland, both provided astute and invaluable comments on my work, for which I am truly thankful. I would also like to thank Prof. Paul Anderson for accepting this exercise in biblical theology in the Biblical Interpretation Series. Needless to say I remain wholly responsible for the shortcomings inevitable in this sort of work (1 Cor 13:12). I am grateful for the repeated personal "research grants" and support given me by my mother, Nicole Hennum. Last, and most importantly, I would like to thank my wife Magdalena Nygaard for her sacrificial support throughout the length of this project. This work is dedicated to her and to our children.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AASF	Annales academiae scientiarum Fennicae
AB	Anchor Bible
ACCS	Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
ABD	*Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Edited by D. N. Freedman. 6. Vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
BBB	Bonner Biblische Beiträge
BBET	Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese und Theologie
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BEvTh	Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie
BHT	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
Bib	*Biblica*
BIS	Biblical Interpretations Series
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BR	*Biblical Research*
BTB	*Biblical Theology Bulletin*
BTS	Biblical Tools and Studies
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CahRB	Cahiers de la Revue Biblique
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CC	Continental Commentaries
CGNTC	Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary
ConBNT	Coniectanea Biblica, New Testament Series
CW	Die christliche Welt
DIA	Diacritics
DR	Downside Review
EKKNT	Evangelish-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
EQ	Evangelical Quarterly
EvT	*Evangelische Theologie*
Exp	Expositor
ExpTim	*Expository Times*

FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FB	Forschung zur Bibel
Forum	Foundations and Facets Forum, New series
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GNC	Good News Commentaries
GNT	Grundrisse zum Neuen Testament
HBS	Herder Biblische Studien
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HTKNT	Herder Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HUT	Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie
ICC	International Critical Commentary
Int	*Interpretation*
JAAR	*Journal of the American Academy of Religion*
JPTSS	Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series
IrBibStud	Irish Biblical Studies
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JETS	*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
JR	*Journal of Religion*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JSQ	*Jewish Studies Quarterly*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament (Meyer-Kommentar)
LD	Lectio divina
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
MThSt	*Marburger Theologische Studien*
NAC	New American Commentary
NCB	New Century Bible
NEB	Neue Echter Bibel
NIBC	New International Biblical Commentary
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NLH	New Literary History
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NovT Supp	Novum Testamentum Supplement Series
NTAbh	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen

NTD	Das Neue Testament Deutsch
NTF	Neutestamentliche Forschungen
NTG	New Testament Guides
NTOA	Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus
NTS	New Testament Studies
OBT	Overtures to Biblical Theology
ÖTK	Ökumenischer Taschenbuchskommentar zum Neuen Testament
PIOL	Publication de l'Institute orientalist de Louvain
PNTC	Pelican New Testament Commentaries
POC	Proche-Orient Chrétien
RAC	*Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*. Edited by E. Dassmann and T. Kluser. Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1950–
RechBib	Recherches bibliques
Ref	Reflection
RivB	*Rivista Biblica Italiana*
RNT	Regensburger Neues Testament
RSR	*Recherches de Science Religieuse*
SBB	Stuttgarter Biblische Beiträge
SBFA	Studium Biblicum Franciscanum Analecta
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SBLSymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SBM	Stuttgarter Biblische Monographie
SBS	Stutgarter Bibelstudien
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SC	Sources Chrétiennes
SE	*Studia Evangelica*
SemeiaSt	Semeia Studies
SHR	Studies in the History of Religion (supplement to *Numen*)
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in late Antiquity
SJT	*Scottish Journal of Theology*
SNTSMS	Society of New Testament Studies Monograph Studies
SP	Sacra Pagina
SpirT	Spirituality Today
Str-B	Strack, H. L. and P. Billerbeck. *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*. 6 vols. Munich: Beck, 1922–61.

SUS	Sein und Sendung
TANTZ	*Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter*
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976.
TF	*Theologische Forschung*
Them	*Themelios*
THKNT	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
ThKNT	Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
ThTo	*Theology Today*
TRE	*Theologische Realenzyklopädie*. Edited by G. Krause and G. Müller. 36 vols. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1977–2004.
TSAJ	Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism
TTZ	*Trier Theologische Zeitschrift*
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
TZ	*Theologische Zeitschrift*
USQR	Union Seminary Quarterly Review
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZEE	*Zeitschrift für evangelische Etik*
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentlische Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche*
ZTK	*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Prayer is central to the Christian 'religion.'[1] It is only fair that the prayers of the NT have received considerable attention in biblical scholarship.[2] This is especially the case with Luke which contains the most material on prayer in the NT.[3] The prayers of the NT have often been discussed in connection to such historical questions as the development of Christology, the *Sitz im leben* of the texts, or the early Christian liturgy.[4] However, compared to other subjects, 'prayer' as such seldom acts as a main locus of investigation.[5] A number of problems immediately confront the researcher who directs attention to this important, and difficult, topic.[6] 'Religious experience' almost by definition brings with it the notion of causes that evade rational inquiry. One basic problem is the distinction between a participant and an observer view (cf. the emic/etic distinction in anthropology).[7] The texts in question speak of prayer as a relation to a God who is thought to hear and answer. Now, a putative relationship to God only makes sense within the discourse in question.[8] To Karl Barth prayer was "at once word, thought, and life."[9] In fact most forms of Christian

---

[1] "Prayer is the central phenomenon of religion." Heiler 1932, 1. Cf. Klauser, Michel and von Severus in *RAC* 9:1–35. To Feuerbach "the ultimate essence of religion is revealed by the simplest act of religion—prayer." Feuerbach 1989, 122.

[2] For bibliograpies on NT prayer cf. Dorneich 1982; Harding 1994. For a recent presentation of major modern exegetical works on prayer in the NT cf. Ostmeyer 2006, 1–28.

[3] On prayer in Luke cf. Ott 1965; Harris 1966; Monloubou 1976; Feldkämper 1978; Crump 1992; Holmås 2011.

[4] For an example of a Christological emphasis see Bousset 1921 or Hurtado 2003. Deissmann read the prayer texts as expessions of a popular cult or "folk religion." Deissmann 1899; Deissmann 1923. For examples of the *Sitz im Leben* approach cf. Bultmann 1926, 165–174; Jeremias 1967; Caba 1974. For reconstructions of the early liturgy cf. Bradshaw 2002.

[5] Hamman observes that although prayer is the soul of faith "on est surpris de constater combien sporadique sont les études consacrées à ce sujet." Hamman 1959, 5. So also Longenecker 2001, xii; Clements-Jewery 2005, 1.

[6] "The subjects which are most interesting in themselves do not lend themselves best to accurate observation and systematic study." Polanyi 1964, 139. Prayer is "One of the most difficult subjects for a philosopher." Levinas 1997, 269.

[7] Cf. Harris et al. 1990.

[8] Cf. Thiselton 1986, 4.

[9] Barth 1985, 29. Cf. the old adage *lex orandi, lex credendi*.

theology unite reflection and praxis, or spirituality and theology.[10] From the way the texts are constructed it must be concluded that they cannot be thought to fully refer without the self-involving response of faith.[11] This is in line with much ancient philosophy which sought to integrate the religious dimension in science.[12] Can something still be said about this religious dimension of the Gospels, apart from the call to participate? The religious experience as such, or the "relationship with God," is hard to describe with the language of scientific enquiry. However, I propose that it is possible to describe also to an outsider a number of textual patterns which elicit a response in the audience, in one sense describing a part of the grammar of the emic view.[13]

The exegesis will describe textual patterns that come together to elicit the response of prayer. This work will in turn provide material for a discussion of how the texts construe praying humans. This allows the religious claims of the texts, and the experiences to which they witness, to be an integrated part of the proposed theological anthropology. The nexus created between text and audience allows a significant place for religious experience. Berger argues, in my view correctly, that "religious ideation is grounded in religious activity, relating to it in a dialectical manner."[14] Dunn has called for similar realisations in the area of NT exegesis: "Ever fresh religious experience in dynamic interaction with the original witness of the Christ event was the living matrix of NT theology."[15] The exegetical work will continue along these lines and maintain the texts'

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[10] A representantive collection of theologians from different traditions can be quoted: Barth 1963; 160; Bonino 1975, 88; Maquarrie 1986, 587; Gutiérrez 1988, xxxiv; McGrath 1995, 66; Špidlik 1999, 456. Vanhoozer 2005, 15.

[11] Cf. Briggs 2001. Some argue that therefore NT theology and anthropology are only feasible in the context of ecclesiology. So Hübner 1990, 27. So also Niebuhr 1989, 21–44, especially 35–36. Likewise Childs 1992, 9, 86. In this regard I follow Bovon who argues that "um das Vaterunser zu erklären, ist es nötig, beten zu können." Bovon 1996, 142.

[12] The philosophical schools of Greek antiquity strived for wisdom, most often seen as "the state of peace of mind." Hadot 1995, 102. This state was understood as a form of deified friendship with the gods and was attained to through spiritual exercises (ἄσκησις μελέτη). Hadot 1995, 220f. "For ancient philosophers, the word *askesis* designated exclusively the spiritual exercises." Hadot 1995, 128. Luke shares with ancient history writing a "thorough integration of theology" in the historical task. Rotschild 2004, 295, cf. also 5–6.

[13] The goal is not to repeat the claims of the texts, or evaluate their truth-content. It is rather to analyse how the texts can be thought to create a particular spirituality. However, "concern for the way in which a text wishes to be appropriated by the reader can lead to the analysis of important features of the text, and such analysis will often sharpen our awareness that the text does seek appropriation at a deep level." Tannehill 1975, 203.

[14] Berger 1967, 40.

[15] Dunn 1975, 361.

setting in communal religious life, a *praxis pietatis*.[16] In the context of ancient literature the texts of the NT can be said to contain a particularly high amount of language of religious experience.[17] Early Christianity cannot be properly described without reference to its religious dimension.[18] The 'theology' I will display is not thought of as a set of systematised abstracts; rather it is made up of witnesses to 'religious experiences' passed on through a tradition.[19] This approach also enables me to indicate the texts' potential for forming such experiences today (more on this in 1.3 and 1.4). Biblical theology is here not conceived of as a description of the author's worldview, neither is it understood solely as the contemporary ecclesial application of the texts. The exegesis contains what could be called both descriptive and constructive elements.[20] Making sense of a text, or recounting a historical narrative, always contains an element of construction. In this sense I pursue the exegetical task with the aim of engaging in constructive theology.[21]

Traditionally, theology was intended as a study of "the whole of reality and its different aspects *sub ratione Dei*."[22] Today, in contrast, human

---

[16] In this I take important cues from Stephen Barton's work on Spirituality in the Gospels. Barton 1992. Cf. Berger "Spiritualität ist ein Grundanliegen gerade aus dem Neuen Testament." Berger 2000, 14.

[17] So Johnson 1998, 4. Further, the earliest Christians "considered themselves caught up by, defined by, a power not in their control but rather controlling them, a power that derived from the crucified and raised Messiah Jesus." Johnson 1998, 184. Cf. Likewise Hurtado 2000, 183–205. The writers of the Gospels do not share the modern division between natural and "supernatural." DeConick 2006, 6. On this cf. also Martin 1995; Douglas 1966. In Scripture "the two realms of the sublime and the everyday are not only actually unseparated but basically inseparable." Auerbach 1953, 22.

[18] Consideration of the religious dimension is often lacking in exegesis. So Tannehill 1975, 3; Patte 1990, ix; Theissen 1999, 1–18. On a historical account it can be shown that "[a] reading through all the strata of the Synoptic tradition reveals that the importance of prayer is stressed in all of them." Dunn 1975, 16.

[19] So Niebuhr 1989; Brueggemann 1997. A Bibical theology focusing on a set of propositions can be thought to work with an over-realised eschatology. It stands in danger of giving the impression that there is not more to be said about God. Cf. Thiselton 2007, 64. A more narrative approach maintains the diversity of the Biblical texts. "Propositonalist theology at its worst is guilty of *de-dramatizing* Scripture." Vanhoozer 2005, 87.

[20] In this I follow the early Childs who argued that "The rigid separation between the descriptive and constructive elements of exegesis strikes at the roots of the theological task of understanding the Bible." Childs 1974, xiii. So also Harrisville 1999, 8.

[21] "Theology is our effort to bring sense and order to the affirmations and responses to which the Gospel leads us." Culpepper 1998, 88.

[22] Wilfred 2006, 24–32. Tr. "Under the aspect of God." The texts' claims of 'revelation' are part of their religious function. This aspect must be included in a discussion of the texts potential for forming a particular piety.

experience and science are often subject to "functional differentiation."[23] 'Religion' is viewed as a limited discourse, with its own rationality. In biblical studies a distinction is sometimes made between 'theology' and 'religion.' This has led to an investigation of prayer as a development in the history of ideas, or as an example of the universal phenomena of religious experience. In contrast, in the context of this monograph I use 'theology' to designate a discipline which has the potential of integrating various domains of life.[24] It can be used as a discourse which counters the epistemological compartmentalisation that often marks contemporary thought.[25] Theological exegesis or biblical theology is in this sense thought of as an integrative approach; one that is interdisciplinary by definition. A main point of convergence in the present work is that of biblical exegesis, particularly literary analysis, and systematic theology.[26] The result might be less detail in particulars, but at the same time a clearer understanding of the larger theological picture the texts create.

I have divided the exegetical analysis into two steps (see further 1.4). These aspects are not understood as a progression; rather they depend on each other. I present:

1. The construction of the ideal pray-er in the four Gospels
2. The description of the ideal pray-er in the four Gospels

With 'pray-er' I mean the person praying.[27] The first aspect requires a close reading of the text with special attention paid to the aspects that work together to construct ideals in prayer. Examples of this include the

---

[23] Borgman and Wilfred 2006, 7. The term is used to describe how a unified perspective on life has been split into functional structures. In theology the result is sometimes that God is reduced to a *Deus ex machina* or a 'God of the gaps.'

[24] Wilfred 2006, 31–32. It could be used as a return to a 'first order' discourse about reality, with 'real' disagreements in place of subjecting arguments to a 'death by a thousand cuts.'

[25] For a concise description of the functional differentiation of contemporary thought cf. Gabriel 2006, 13–23.

[26] Exegesis and theology have always been hermeneutically interdependent. However, not always overtly so. Lash has displayed how narrative and metaphysics, or metaphor and analogy, depend on each other. Lash 1989, 113–137. Goldsworthy displays how "God's economics of salvation" and ontology are interrelated. Goldsworthy 2002, 37–45. Biblical theology depends on the prior existence of dogmatic constructs, like the canon. Cf. Watson's call for a thorough integration of Systematic theology and Biblical exegesis. Watson 1997, 2–9. Powell notes how the theological concept of 'salvation history' is tangential to a narrative analysis of plot. Powell 1990, 74.

[27] English does not provide for a distinction between the act and the agent in this instance. Cf. German *Gebet* vs. *Beter*.

strict progressive development of the theme of prayer in Luke, where the disciples are gradually led into Jesus' form of prayer. Another example is the ironic traits of Mark and John where the audience knows Jesus' true nature, and can follow him (in contrast to the religious authorities who 'should' be able to teach on piety). I will point out a number of important meaning-bearing constructions which come together to give the material on prayer its appeal. In that sense the exegesis takes heuristic clues from linguistic pragmatics.[28] The second aspect involves a discussion of the resultant picture of prayer, an explicit description of the ideals in so far as they can be abstracted from the texts. The ideals propounded will in turn provide material for reflections on how the prayer-texts contribute to New Testament anthropology.[29] In this introductory chapter, the material, presuppositions and method of this monograph will be presented.

Material

Primary Material

The prayer-texts of the canonical Gospels constitute the primary material for this investigation. In order to maintain the narrative context all the material on prayer in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John will be considered.[30] Passages from Acts will only be referred to as the immediate context of Luke. The material in Acts adds to the Gospel, but it is still determined by the character of Jesus. John's inclusion in the group might be subject to more debates. Still, on a literary account all the Gospels can be related without asking questions of dependence or sources (or at least bracketing

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[28] Pragmatics is understood as a mode of enquiry which analyses how various contexts come together to construct meaning and overcome ambiguity. It focuses on linguistic meaning as determined by usage in a tradition or speech community, emphasising implied meaning. It is not seen as a limitless semiotic play but as "a general cognitive, social, and cultural perspective on linguistic phenomena in relation to their usage in forms of behaviour." Verschueren 1999, 7. Language use is an "intention to communicate something to somebody." Mey 1993, 55. The Gospels contain "intentional and contextual language use." Winter-Nielsen 2002, 53.

[29] In itself the term "anthropology" first appeared in Protestant humanism in the sixteenth century. It entered systematic theologies as an individual topic in the mid-nineteenth century. So Farley 1984, 57.

[30] The use of the traditional names of the Gospels does not here entail a commitment to any theory regarding their provenance or authorship. The use of 'Matthew says' or 'Jesus says' is only a matter of convenience. Throughout I use 'Gospel' for the texts, 'gospel' for the message.

such questions).[31] Taken together these texts can fruitfully be compared. It is also a historical fact that the texts have been read together to form a particular 'spirituality.'[32] The potential impact of the canon can be analysed just as the effects of a single text can.[33] In this context the Gospels' use of OT material is important as a part of the Biblical canon, and the theological task of the exegesis.[34] There will however, be no place for extensive analysis of the exegetical methods of the NT authors. Neither are the OT texts analysed according to their historical setting, but as the religious text used by the NT authors to understand the decisive acts of God in Jesus.

In this work an inclusive concept of prayer will be used.[35] This is above all necessitated by the different language of John. 'Prayer' as such is not a term directly derived from the Gospels but is used to render a wide range of Greek terms in modern English. Specific vocabulary can only indicate a passage for discussion.[36] 'Prayer' is here seen as the verbal communication of a first person agent (plural or singular) which presents his or her, or someone else's, situation before God, expecting an answer.[37] This includes, in accordance with Jewish tradition, third person addresses of God (cf. for instance the first petitions of the Our Father).[38] A description of God's saving acts could, depending of the context, be understood as a call for him to act in such a manner again (for instance Lk 1:46–55). Some texts that speak only indirectly of prayer as defined here above have been included as an immediate narrative context for the prayer-material (Mt 4:10; 11:25–26, Jn 4). An analysis of non-verbal aspects of prayer is hard to do in the Gospels. The material that is there (lifting of eyes, withdrawal)

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[31] John was, together with Matthew, the most widespread Gospel of the early church. Hurtado 2006, 28, 30.

[32] Cf. Balla who has set forth a number of historical arguments for considering the NT canon as a distinct collection of texts separated from other texts of early Christianity. Balla 1997, 48–146.

[33] Despite Ashton's contention that the 'results' of literary criticism are "illusory." Cf. Ashton 1994, 141.

[34] The church Fathers have been left out for reasons of space. For collections of the Fathers on prayer cf. Chase 1891; Cabrol 1900; Manson 1955; Hamman 1963.

[35] For a discussion of the problem of definitions see Severus "Gebet" and Michel and Klauser "Gebet II" in *RAC* 9:1–35.

[36] For a thorough monograph-length discussion of the various prayer-terms of the NT cf. Ostmeyer 2006. For a good discussion of OT prayer terms cf. Miller 1994, 32–54. For an analysis of prayer-vocabulary in Luke, together with a syntagmatic field analysis cf. Holmås 2011, 21–47.

[37] Following Reventlow 1986, 89. "Dass es Rede ist, in der ein Mensch oder eine Gemeinschaft von Menschen seine (ihre) grundsätzliche oder aktuelle Situation vor Gott bringt." So also Auvinen 2003, 37.

[38] Cf. Reventlow 1986, 130, 161.

is mentioned in passing and is hard to systematise.[39] The rite of the Last Supper could be seen as an important non-verbal communication with God, one that is akin to prayer as here defined. Yet, in this context the term 'devotion' might be more appropriate. Inclusion of the Last Supper in this sense would expand the field of the investigation to include almost everything that the ideal follower of Jesus is expected to do. It is therefore excluded (still the explicit blessing of Jesus at this scene is included, as a meal-time prayer).

Secondary Material

The secondary material is in main the modern exegetical literature on the Gospels.[40] I have chosen material which has been deemed relevant to a theological description of prayer, broadly defined. For instance, in the case of commentaries I have chosen to focus mainly on the theological discussions that often follow upon an exegetical discussion.[41] Further, I have chosen to focus on how the texts represent the praying human, hence I have used material which is relevant to a theological anthropology. Due to the large amount of primary material there is often no space for an extended independent discussion of all exegetical details. However, on some particularly contentious issues I have engaged in a more direct exegetical discussion, arguing for my position (for instance concerning the eschatology of the Our Father in Matthew). There is also some discussion of alternative text critical readings, mainly where they function as interesting comments upon the text. This means that the main body of secondary material is such that supports my reading; the detailed defence of this position can be found in the referenced works. Published monographs on prayer in the Gospels are discussed concisely at the beginning of each chapter (only relevant for Mark and Luke). The concluding chapter discusses the emerging picture of prayer within a larger conceptual

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[39] Cf. in this respect the later mention of a cruciform prayer stance, the 'orant' (*Odes Sol.* 27:1–3; 1 Clem 2:3; early Christian art). Hurtado 2003, 613. Cf. Ehrlich who analyses the non-verbal language of prayer in rabbinic material. Ehrlich 2004. Even less is found on music which is seen as a way of communicating with God in the OT. Cf. Geiger and Kessler 2007. Silence before the divine is not mentioned in the Gospels. Cf. though Rev 8:1; 1 Kg 19:12; Ps 62:1, 5; Hab 2:20.

[40] For more popular discussions by NT exegetes cf. Thomson 1959; Spencer and Spencer 1990; Doohan and Doohan 1992; Koenig 1992; Karris 2000; Werline 2007; Crump 2006.

[41] The exegetical discussions most often provide a basis for the theological discussions and they have of course been scrutinised in the reading of this material.

framework. It is more directly theological and in addition to exegetical literature includes theological and philosophical material as secondary literature.

Presuppositions

Presuppositions Concerning Reading Situation and Implied Reader

I read the Gospels as 1st century religious texts with a general Jewish-Christian provenance. The historical situatedness is part of the texts' otherness, and is part of their ability to address new situations from the outside. At the same time the main focus is here on the internal dynamics of the texts, not historical reconstructions of a purported background. In part the texts construct such a background themselves through extra-textual references. These are both explicit, as in the temporal references of Luke (1:5), or implicit as in the presuppositions concerning Jewish practice found throughout the Gospels.[42] The focus of this monograph remains on the view of reality as constructed by the text. In that sense I use a text-centred approach. At the same time I read the text within its context in a religious setting. Meaning is always 'performed' within a locale, or tradition.[43] This is certainly the case when it comes to 'religion.'[44] To Marcel Mauss prayer is not just "the effusion of a soul, the cry of a feeling," but always part of religious and cultural tradition.[45] In what follows I will outline what I mean by a Jewish-Christian provenance, and then discuss ways in which the texts can be thought to work in a religious setting.

The four canonical Gospels will here be read as stemming from, and intended mainly for, groups that are still within the fold of Judaism, but which sought to define themselves in relation to other Jewish sects.[46] See

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[42] Whether the time-references of Luke are correct or not they explicitly refer to public history.

[43] So Polanyi 1964, 53, 65; MacIntyre 1988, 367.

[44] In the 'existential-hermeneutical' phenomenology of religion experience does not exist apart from interpretation, and experience is not shared without language. Twiss and Conser 1992, 54–70. Likewise Eliade 1963, xiii. Gadamer could also be adduced as support of such a view of experience. Gadamer 1977, 77–78. As shown by Moran 2000, 269–271.

[45] Mauss 2003, 24.

[46] To Boyarin Judaism and Christianity were not separate religions in late Antiquity. Boyarin 1999, 1–21. So also Dunn 1991, 234. Davies can even speak of "New Testament Judaism." Davies 1999, 78. "There was not one ruling, all-powerful group in Early Judaism; many groups claimed to possess the normative interpretation of the Torah." Charlesworth 1990, 37. So also Sanders 1998, 52–53.

for instance the parable on prayer in Lk 18:9–14 where the ideal and anti-ideal characters draw on different Psalms in their prayers. One does it 'rightly' the other 'falsely,' exemplifying different ways of interpreting the tradition. It can be observed that all the Gospels include material which can be said to take Jewish aspects for granted, material that actively endorses Jewish aspects, and material which criticizes aspects of Jewish customs—all at the same time.[47] The texts work as if they are legitimate heirs of the OT and Jewish tradition, both its texts and its praxis. That is not to suggest that the original Gospel communities were similar, but that the texts early came to be used by a common audience of early Jewish-Christian communities. Neither do I suggest that these groups by necessity were regarded as being within the fold by what became formative Judaism.[48] The Gospels betray a concern for the inclusion of non-Jews which goes beyond most other Jewish sects. This, together with the understanding of Jesus, eventually forced a gradual parting of the ways.[49] In the following few paragraphs I will indicate why I find it plausible to read the Gospels as Jewish texts.

Matthew is often regarded as the Gospel which is most eager to define the community's relation to Judaism. I follow those who read Matthew as a text written from within Judaism.[50] Bornkamm's change of mind points to the complexity of the issue. In 1963 he argues for a Matthean community still within Judaism.[51] In 1971 he argues that the community had separated from the synagogue.[52] It can be observed that the antagonists of the Matthean story are Jews, but so are the heroes. There are words of judgment over the scribes and Pharisees (especially Ch. 23), but also over the followers of Jesus (22:14; 24:45–51). Matthew relies heavily on OT

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[47] This has been and is an area of controversy and debate, I do not in any way propose to solve any issue, only indicate the presuppositions of my work.

[48] However, it is improbable that the *birkat ha-minim* of Jamnia was directed primarily at Christians. Cf. Kimelman 1981.

[49] Skarsaune convincingly argues against the view of a decisive break between Christianity and Judaism at the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE. He describes a complex interaction between the early church and the synagogue well into the fifth century, involving both praxis and doctrine. Skarsaune 2002, 279–421. Cf. Likewise Pritz 1988; Boyarin 2004; Becker and Yoshiko Reed 2007.

[50] Some options might be crystalised: a) Matthew writes from within Judaism: Davies 1964; Goulder 1974, 152; Harrington 1991, 1–3, 17; Saldarini 1994. b) Matthew stands in between: Overman 1990, 148; Stanton 1992, 114, 124; Repschinski 2000, 346–347; Luz 2005, 9. c) Matthew is not particularly concerned with Judaism: Clark 1947, 165–172; Hare 1967, 153. Cf. Jerome's elusive comment on a Hebrew Gospel of Matthew. Jerome Epist. 20:5.

[51] Bornkamm 1963, 39.

[52] Bornkamm 1971, 40.

quotes in the presentation of his story (1:23; 2:6, 15, 18, 23, etc). The same conceptual reliance can be seen in the use of Jewish titles for Jesus (Messiah, Son of God, and Son of David). The apocalyptic imagery of ch. 24–25 is also decidedly Jewish. Moreover, God is the God of Israel (15:24, 31), and the law is viewed positively (5:1, 7–20).[53]

At the same time Matthew can speak of your/their synagogues (4.23; 12:9; 13:54). The picture that emerges is one where Jesus is the only interpreter; the scribes and Pharisees are wrong (15:1–20; 19:3–11; 22:34–40; ch. 23). Jesus teaches a better righteousness (5:20). The talk of the destruction of Jerusalem is standard prophetic material (22:7; 23:28). The cry that "His blood be upon us and our children" is more problematic (27:25). "Us" and "our children" refers to the "people" (λάος) which seems to be used as a general designation for the Jewish people. Matthew's new way of defining the people of God by reference to Jesus the Messiah, makes for a conflict with other sects within Judaism. In light of the destruction of the Temple (ch. 24–25) God will now gather his people from the ends of the earth (8:11–12; 28:18). At this very point in time (23:35–36 "this generation") God creates a new nation (21:33–43).[54] Yet, this is not a break and a new start; it is rather a definition of the tradition which sees itself as its only true keeper. The claim that one expelled from the community is to be regarded as a Gentile (18:17) suggests that the community sees itself as Israel.[55]

Mark does not use the more polemical tone of either Matthew or John. In the interaction with Jewish leaders Jesus comes across as a rabbi among rabbis (especially 2:1–3:6 and chapters 11 and 12). The conflict is over right observance, and Jesus is truly observant (1:9, 35, 44; 7:10; 10:19; 12:29–31; 14:1, 12; cf. also 16:1). Jewish practices are both explained (as if the audience would not know 2:19; 7:3–4; 10:2; 14:1, 12; 14:64; 15:42), and discussed (as if they were an issue 2:1–3:6; 7:19), maybe pointing to a community which included both Jews and Gentiles. Indeed, Mark includes more interaction with Gentiles than the other Gospels (5:1–20; 7:24–30, 31–37; 15:39). Yet this is not by necessity a non-Jewish trait. Moreover, Jesus is portrayed as a prophet (6:1–6), teacher (ch. 4), the Messiah (8:29; 13:22; 14:61), and the Son of David (10:47–48). Jesus is also associated with John the Baptist who

[53] The passage in 23:23 should not be read as a rejection of tithing herbs, but as a rejection of faulty priorities in applying the law.

[54] Cf. France 2007, 1058.

[55] It is true that there is an anti-semitic 'potential' in the text (cf. 27:25). However, an anti-semitic position presupposes a Jew-Gentile-Christian distinction which was not clear at the time of writing. Cf. Harrington 1991, 21–22.

was a Jewish teacher, and even placed together with the Pharisees (2:18). A basic reliance on the OT and Jewish modes of expression, like apocalyptic, can be found throughout the Gospel. See for instance Mk 13 which is apocalyptic and discusses the Temple. In general Mark's eschatological exegesis of OT passages, especially Isaiah, is comparable to contemporary Jewish exegesis.[56] Altogether this suggests a Jewish-Christian community with an openness to Gentiles.[57]

The place of Judaism in Luke is a contentious issue. Read together with the sequel in Acts it is obvious that Luke is more explicit on the inclusion of Gentiles than the other Gospels. Yet, this is not by necessity an argument for a 'Gentile' provenance or audience. The text can still be plausibly placed within a Jewish-Christian sphere of origin.[58] The Gospel of Luke is more literary than the other two Synoptics, and is quite similar to contemporary Jewish historiography.[59] Tyson has laid out the history of Luke's stance towards the Jews in his *Luke, Judaism, and the Scholars: Critical Approaches to Luke-Acts*.[60] He ends the survey with the ground breaking study of Jervell which rejects much of his predecessors in arguing that Luke is pro-Jewish through and through. To Jervell Israel as a whole did not reject the gospel; it was rather split by the gospel.[61] Those unrepentant Jews who reject the gospel are purged from the people; the Jews obedient to Jesus continue the people of God.[62] The mission to the gentiles can only be commenced once the promises have been fulfilled to Israel.[63] The Gentiles have a share in the promises to Israel.[64] This seems plausible, with the caveat that Luke does not engage in extended discussions of the fate of the 'unrepentant' Jews after the fulfillment of the promises brought by Jesus (as does Paul in Rom 9–11). Luke begins with an account of Jesus' infancy couched in faithful Jewish piety centered on the Temple

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56 Marcus 1992, 199–204.

57 Such a setting would be possible both in Rome and the Eastern suggested provenances (Antioch, Galilee).

58 Malina and Pilch's commentary on Acts is helpful on this issue. Although some of their arguments seem to push the evidence too far the conclusion that Luke-Acts is basically a Jewish document is cautiously followed here. Malina and Pilch 2008. For a sound discussion of this issue cf. Wasserberg 1998.

59 So Bovon 1989, 19. Marguerat sees Luke-Acts as a work at the crossroads of Greek and Jewish Historiography. Marguerat 2002, 25.

60 Tyson 1999.

61 Jervell 1972, 41–74.

62 Jervell 1972, 15, 42–43.

63 Jervell 1972, 43.

64 Jervell 1972, 56–61.

(1:5–2:54). This picture is continued to the end of the Gospel, where Jesus' followers praise God in the Temple (24:53). Moreover, also Luke emphasises that OT promises have been fulfilled in Jesus. Luke does not include the vehement attack on the scribes and Pharisees found in Matthew (Mt 23). Rather, the followers of Jesus continue the true piety found in Israel (cf. the infancy narrative).

Although John is different from the other Gospels, the text is not less Jewish.[65] Meeks can state that: "the Gospel of John is indeed one of the most Jewish of the early Christian writings."[66] To John "salvation is of the Jews" (4:22). The Semitic style and expression of John can best be understood against the background of a diverse first century Judaism.[67] The Gospel displays a detailed knowledge of Palestinian geography and Jewish customs. There are references to a number of landmarks, some of which were destroyed AD 70 (cf. 4:5; 5:2; 9:7; 10:23; 18:1, 15, 28, 33; 19:17; 20:19). John also speaks of details concerning Jewish feasts, weddings, the Sabbath and burial. The OT is used extensively, but the exegesis is often more typological than that found in the Synoptics (cf. for instance Jn 19:37 using Ex 12:46, and possibly Ps 34:20). Throughout Jesus is presented as the one greater than Moses (1:14 etc). There is also evidence of what could be termed Rabbinic arguments (5:31–47). It is in this thoroughly Jewish context that the negative material on "the Jews" must be understood (famously 8:44, "the devil is your Father"). "The Jews" (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι) must in all probability be seen as a particular group within Judaism, not a generic term.[68] It is true that John engages in polemics against "the Jews," but this must be understood as an attempt to address them with the Gospel, not a form of rejection.[69]

The Gospels are examples of how the faith narratives of the Jewish-Christian communities were codified. They are presented as continuing the basic redemptive narrative recounted across the various books of the OT.[70] In the Gospels Jesus is presented as the high-point of the earlier

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[65] John is basically Jewish. So Marshall 2004, 511.

[66] Meeks 1975, 185. So also Barrett 1975, 72.

[67] John uses a Semitic idiom. Beasley-Murray 1987, liv.

[68] In John the term is used in an intra-Jewish setting, it belongs to a particular historical context. Moreover, it cannot be taken for granted that the charges against "the Jews" in John, exlusion and death-threats, are fabrications by the author/redactor. So De Boer 2001, 142–143. So also Moloney 1998, 10.

[69] So Motyer 1997; Kierspel 2006. Cf. Ashton who calls the tension a family quarrel. Ashton 1993, 151.

[70] "The New Testament is related to the Old through a common tradition of language and life experience." Stuhlmacher 1995, 8.

tradition. The audience is invited, encouraged, and exhorted to follow him.[71] In doing so, they are told, they are the true heirs of the promises of Israel. In the Jewish and Christian tradition the OT points to an implicit narrative larger than those that are recounted directly, a narrative about God.[72] To the early Christians their experiences, and earlier traditions, are part of that story.[73] The NT continues the narrative constructed by the earlier texts. The Gospels are theology in the sense of being expressions of a lived experience, a testimony of God's continued work.[74] In general terms I presuppose that humans understand themselves and their experiences not in abstracts but in narratives.[75] The Gospels and the OT tradition provide a frame in which the individual understands his or her personal story as part of God's story.[76] This is in fact what the Gospels set out to accomplish. They turn the audience over to their view of reality through inviting them to participate in a religious narrative.[77]

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[71] 'Audience' is used throughout instead of 'reader' to emphasise that the majority would meet the texts as 'hearers.' According to Harris about ten percent were literate in the Roman Empire. Harris 1989, 267. Cf. also Hezser who gives an even lower number for Roman Palestine. Hezser 2001, 496–504. Cf. Deines' criticism against complex narratological approaches to texts that were mainly *heard*. Cf. Deines 2004, 41–93.

[72] "[A]story behind the story" Kelber 1983, 61. "[A] much larger, ongoing story." Darr 1992, 51. It is a narrative running from creation to the "eschatological triumph of God's purposes." Hurtado 2003, 268. So also Dahl 1975, 5–8; Lindbeck 1984, 121; Frei 1997; Vanhoozer 2005, 39. To Goldberg the Exodus speaks of God as "a character developed over time." Goldberg 1982, 220. For a different view cf. Murphy 2007 (*God is not a Story: Realism Revisited*).

[73] The pre-critical reader was to "see his disposition, his actions and passions, the shape of his own life as well as that of his era's events as figures of that storied world." Frei 1974, 3.

[74] As argued by Brueggemann 1997. Cf. also Bauckham 2006, 472–508. In textual interpretation it is next to impossible to separate experience from its literary context. So Wolfson 1994, 120; DeConick 2006, 5–8; Rowland 1982, 214–240. To Dunn "The earliest traditions are the product of disciple-response." Dunn 2003, 129.

[75] Following Crites 1971, 291–311; Sarbin 1986; Polkinghorne 1988; Bruner 1990; Ricoeur 1992. For a synthesising discussion of Ricoeur's narrative anthropology cf. Stiver 2001, 167–175. "It is only through narrative that we know ourselves as active entities that operate through time." Porter Abbot 2002, 123.

[76] All experience is conditioned by "historical, cultural, and linguistic particularity." Johnson 1998, 54. So also Geertz 1973. Instinctual experiences, like fear or hunger, are not implied.

[77] Culpepper 1983, 148. "The world of the Scripture stories is not satisfied with claiming to be a historically true reality—it insists that it is the only real world." Therefore "we are to fit our own life into this world, feel ourselves to be elements in its structure of universal history." Auerbach 1953, 14–15. Narratives present a possible mode of being. So Ricoeur 1981, 177. "We may perhaps conceive the fictive as a means of overstepping the given, which is bound to cause a tranformation of what it is." Iser 1989, 268.

In what follows I will discuss how the texts can be thought to construct a particular mode of prayer. The Gospels are here read as texts that describe, direct, and bring about religious life in a community. They are seen as intra-community pastoral texts.[78] The polemical needs of the community, which often take centre stage in exegetical discussions, are but one part of a larger whole.[79] Evidence for a pastoral intention is found in the Gospels themselves (for instance Lk 1:1–4; Jn 20:31), and in the early church's use of the texts in catechesis and worship. The genre of *bios* or *vita* goes some way towards explaining the reading situation of the Gospels in the first century.[80] At this time biographies were often used as documents of formation which defined the group that used them.[81] They focused attention on the teaching and exemplary function of one or more founding figures, directing the praxis of the community.[82] Such a function is also evident in rabbinical literature. When there was no authoritative ruling on an issue the conduct of a known rabbi could be quoted for a correct interpretation of Torah. In doing as the master did the follower acted in accordance with Torah (cf. b. Ber 62a).[83] The Gospels also follow a number of conventions of the history writing of the Greco-Roman period.[84] At the same time the texts came to be used in a way distinct to the Christian community.[85] They are thought to display the work of the God of Israel in Jesus Christ, and as 'revelation' enable participation in

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[78] So Best 1979, 84–92; Best 1981, 12; Best 1982, 19–35; Likewise Barrett 1961, 52; Hooker 1983, 88, 104, 116. Cf. Boring 2006, 1: Mark is composed "to be read aloud, all at once, in the context of the worshipping congregation."

[79] Examples include 'conflict' with Judaisers, Hellenists, competing missionaries, pneumatics or others as a hermeneutical key. Cf. for instance Weeden 1971; Smiga 1992; Riley 1995.

[80] For the Gospels as biography cf. Talbert 1977; Aune 1982; Burridge 1992; Frickenschmidt 1996.

[81] Aune 1987, 59; Robbins 1992, 10; Wills 1997, 177–179. Examples include: Porphyry's *Vit. Plot*, Xenophon's *Mem.*, and Lucian's *Alex.* Xenophon's *Agesilaus* was written to be a paradigm (παράδειγμα) which led the readers to become better people (10:2).

[82] Riley 1997, 427–436. The Gospels emphasise both Jesus words and his deeds. So Burridge 2007, 4, 33, 62–78.

[83] Cf. Burridge 2007, 73–74. The example provided a *ma'aseh*, a precedent.

[84] One example is the emphasis on eyewitness (autopsy). Cf. Byrskog 2000, 48–91, 300–306.

[85] It is testimony, so Bauckham 2006, 472–508. To Käsemann the apocalyptic of the early Christian writings is "the particular kind of eschatology which attempts to talk about ultimate history." Käsemann 1969, 109. n. 2. Cf. further Collins 1984.

that work.[86] Therefore, the 'Gospel' is a form bound to a particular religious discourse.[87]

One way the Gospels construct a particular praxis is through the presentation of ideals.[88] This is in line with much Classical Greco-Roman literature.[89] As already mentioned the use of exemplary figures is also common in Jewish literature roughly contemporary to the Gospels.[90] In general it can be observed that imitating a teacher was the mode of learning in Jewish tradition.[91] In *The New Moses*, Dale Allison shows how the ideal character of Moses has been used in Jewish and Christian tradition. He uses the category of 'type' to explain how narrative figures come to be used in the construction of other narrative figures. Through this form of parallelism (*sygkrisis*) the characters involved are thought to be connected in a continuum. The traits of an earlier figure are reused in a way that makes them normative for later communities.[92] More than that, Allison argues that Matthew is convinced that "the typological correlations have some deep meaning, that they hold important clues for fathoming God's obscure intentions."[93] In our analysis it is the characters of the Gospels,

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[86] Cf. Reiser on the OT biographical material. Reiser 1999, 1–27. On this cf. also Stibbe 1992, 24–25. For Mark cf. Dormeyer 2002.

[87] The form-critics argued for the unique genre of the Gospels. See Yarbro Collins 2007, 19–22. Auerbach has argued that the Gospels are unlike any other first century literature. Auerbach 1953, 40–49. Cf. Likewise Schnelle 1998. Boring argues convincingly for the Gospel as a Christological Narrative distinct exactly in the kerygmatic portrayal of its unique protagonist. Boring 2006, 6–9.

[88] Ideals are a major concern for the NT. So Lips 1998, 259–309. The authors can be thought to stimulate attitudes in the reader through identification. As described by Iser 1974, 291. Cf. Jones who discusses levels of identification in literary characters. Jones 1974, 283–317.

[89] In ancient Antioch reading was assumed "to produce exemplary beings, their raw humanity moulded and filed away by a double discipline, at once ethical and aesthetic." Festugiere 1959, 211–215. Ancient culture was a "Civilisation of the Paideia." Marrou 1956, 96–101, 217–226. Brown argues that in Late Antiquity one finds "the overwhelming tendency to find what is exemplary in persons rather than in more general entities." Brown 1982, 103–152. Jaeger argues that in early Christianity "literature is paideia in so far as it contains the highest norms of human life, which have taken on their lasting and most impressive form." Jaeger 1993, 92. Ancient Historiography should possess educational value. So Aune 1987, 60–65, 96–97.

[90] Collins and Nickelsburg 1980. These can be divided into three groups: a) those of the ancient past like Noah and Daniel b) those of the future like Messianic figures c) some common roles like visionary, wise man, martyr, and charismatic. Collins and Nickelsburg 1980, 4.

[91] Cf. Sirach 6:34–36; m. *Abot* 1:4; 5:15, 18; 6:6.

[92] Allison 1993, 277.

[93] Allison 1993, 8.

primarily Jesus, which must be analysed to ascertain whether they fill any such function with regard to the implied audience.

By 'ideal' I here mean an existence or mode of being which is aspired to (not necessarily practised). It indicates a 'how to' instruction, but not in the limited ethical sense. Neither is it to be seen strictly as a description of what must be believed. In the texts under consideration the instruction on 'how to pray' includes God's work, ethics, understandings of 'reality,' etc.[94] The ideals set out the proper response to the gospel.[95] In a sense the primary ideal is Jesus, who is used as a type which the disciples are to follow (Mt 9:35–10:16; Mk 1:17; Lk 10:1–16).[96] Therefore the ideals of the Gospels are inseparable from the whole story about Jesus.[97] Aune argues that one function of the Gospels was to reinforce "the paradigmatic function of Jesus."[98] This does not amount to an argument that he is *only* an example. Jesus is a unique character, not simply a paradigm of attainable ethical virtues.[99] Still, the paraenetic function of his character cannot be escaped.[100]

The presentation of religious ideals is common in Paul and the other letter writers. They often refer to types which exemplify how to act in the right manner (τύπος "type" in 1 Tim 4:12; Phil 3:17; 2 Th 3:9; Tit 2:7; 1 Pet 5:3; ὑπόδειγμα "example" in Jam 5:10; 2 Pet 2:6; ὑπογραμμός "example" 1 Pet 2:21). It is interesting that "prototype" (ὑποτύπωσις) refers both to Paul's person (1 Tim 1:16) and to his words (2 Tim 1:13).[101] Here the same word is used to describe both a concrete person and a more abstract ideal. Throughout the letters are also calls to "imitate/emulate" (μιμέομαι 2 Th 3:7, 9; Heb 13:7) an ideal type.[102] The recipients are called to be "imitators" (μιμητής) of "Paul" (1 Cor 4:16), and "Paul" and "Christ" (1 Cor 11:1;

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94 The Gospels are more like practical reason than theoretical reason, indicating the right way to act.

95 On Luke: "From beginning to end, the text urges one to *see, hear*, and *respond* to these things in an appropriate manner." Darr 1992, 53.

96 Cf. Clogg 1944.

97 Burridge emphasises the "whole life" of Jesus as an ethical example. Burridge 2007, 33. Beck on Luke: "The teaching about character cannot be divorced from the rest of his theology." Beck 1989, 180. The concern for a "Christian character" can only be made with reference to the whole narrative of Luke. Beck 1989, 15.

98 Aune 1987, 59–60.

99 Hurtado 2003, 277.

100 On the imitation of Christ cf. Burridge 2007.

101 For a discussion cf. Stanley 1984, 127–141.

102 For similar notions of imitation in contemporary Greco-Roman thought cf. Lucretius *Re. Nat.* 3:1–30; Pliny *Ep.* 7:9; Xenophon *Mem.* 1:6:3ff.

1 Th 1:6), the "churches" (1 Th 2:14), "God" (Eph 5:1), and "those who inherit the promises" (Heb 6:12). The Gospels also function in this way. In these texts ideals are found in the teaching, and in the narrative depiction of the character of Jesus.

One way in which the ideals constructed in the Gospels can be exegeted is through analysis of the texts' implicit communication. Much of the message of the Gospels is found at the level of implicit communication. This is evident for instance in the extensive use of irony, the introductions, the use of symbols, the passing reference to Jewish customs, and the references to rites (Lk 22:14–21). The texts often indirectly refer to and allude to a number of central themes, like the implications of the life and ministry of Jesus, or the acting character of God behind the scenes (in linguistic terms these are 'implicatures'). There are even direct indications that the texts are to be read with attention to the implicit communication (cf. Mt 24:15; Mk 13:14 "let the reader understand"; cf. also Mk 15:21). Implicit communication has been a major element in the interpretation of Mark, which is thought to contain a "Messianic Secret."[103] But this is not relevant only for Mark. All the Gospels communicate main elements only implicitly, at a level 'hidden' to the characters of the narrative.

In this monograph the implicit communication on prayer is a main focus, especially the strategies used in constructing an ideal pray-er. The texts elicit a certain response in its audience, a certain form of prayer. The tradition itself can be thought of as part of what enables the 'experiences' described.[104] In this context the notion of an 'implied reader' is helpful in interpretation.[105] To Scholes, the implied reader is a "property of the text itself, each text implying a particular ideal reader, equipped with certain kinds of knowledge and experience, and capable of being manipulated in certain ways."[106] The 'implied reader' possesses the attitudes and preknowledge necessary for the text to reach its full effect.[107] I read the texts as 1st century Jewish-Christian texts, and the 'implied reader' is described

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[103] Cf. Wrede 1901.

[104] Religious traditions elicit certain experiences through the construction of roles that adherents play out. Cf. Sundén 1981, 38; "For Freud, identification is a psychological process in which the subject assimilates an aspect of the other and is transformed, wholly or partially, according to the model that the other provides." Culler 1975, 110.

[105] I have found Wieringen's synchronic analysis of the implied reader in Isaiah 6–12 suggestive. Wieringen 1998.

[106] Scholes 1975, 14.

[107] So Iser 1978, 34; Kingsbury 1988, 26.

with reference to this context.[108] When the audience align with the implied reader, they will be in a position to participate in the narrative. The 'ideal pray-er' is one aspect of the 'implied reader,' one which acts as a point of entry into the world described by the text.[109]

Presuppositions Concerning Prayer

The following exegesis presupposes an audience with a basic competence in Jewish-Christian piety.[110] By this I mean that the prayer material of the Gospels show evidence of a presupposed background of Jewish prayer and Christ-devotion. These two aspects will be discussed in the following paragraphs. The general picture described is thought of as the pre-knowledge of the 'implied audience.' The texts leave much to be said about prayer. Surely the readers of Mark did not only pray the utterance found in Gethsemane (14:36), or "whatever" as in Mk 11:24. Some sort of praxis is presupposed. The explicit teaching on prayer shows what some of this praxis looked like. At the same time it must be maintained that it does not give a full picture of the piety or prayer-life of the communities. The NT does not clearly describe any of the later worship practices of the Christian community.[111] This is also the case for other Jewish sects during this era.[112] It is a common opinion among historians of religion that central rites are often not written down. "Usually only particularly significant, novel, or controverted practices will tend to be mentioned, and others will probably be passed over in silence."[113] The implied audiences

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[108] Cf. Iser on the historical reader. Iser 1978, 27–28. Darr has commented on this form of reconstruction: "The most we can hope for, then, is to image a *hybrid* reader, part ancient, part modern, part reader, part critic." Darr 1992, 26. It is a fusion of horizons in the sense suggested by Gadamer. Gadamer 2004, 304, 336, 366, 389, 397.

[109] The "implied reader designates a network of response inviting structures, which impel the reader to grasp the text." Iser 1978, 34.

[110] In contrast Taussig reads the prayer material in the light of Cynic philosophy (Taussig 1998) to reach the conclusion that Jesus "does not seem interested in teaching others to pray." Taussig, 1999, 67–68.

[111] Bradshaw 2002, 47–72. The earliest full liturgical manuscripts from the Christian tradition are from the 8th century. Bradshaw 1991, 3.

[112] It was only in the fifth or sixth century that the recording of prayer in writing was 'officially' permitted. Elbogen 1993, 4. The earliest collections are from the ninth century. Bradshaw 2002, 24. In the earliest liturgy known from outside the Bible the general theme and content of prayer was fixed, but the words changed with the precentor. Cf. Abrahams 1923, 107–108. Abelson 1969, 325; Heinemann 1977, 43. Cf. the examples of prohibitions against literal fixation in m. 'Abot 2:13. The earliest liturgical manuscripts from the Christian tradition are from the eight century. Bradshaw 1991, 3.

[113] Bradshaw 2002, 15. Likewise Bradshaw 1991, 16.

of the Gospels do not come as blank sheets to the texts; to varying degrees they are constructed with what amounts to pre-knowledge of the piety of contemporary Judaism. The Gospels set out to correct it, mainly through centering it on Jesus as the fulfillment of the OT promises.

The texts often refer to Jewish customs and texts without comment. It can for instance be observed that the central prayer teaching of the Gospels, the Our Father, would be wholly familiar to a praying Jew in the first century.[114] A general Jewish picture of prayer can be reconstructed from the Hebrew Bible, Early Jewish Literature (Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha with other authors),[115] the Dead Sea Scrolls,[116] and early layers of the rabbinical material (with caveats surrounding dating).[117] The material from Jewish sources is indispensable to the understanding of the piety of the Gospels.[118] There is no room to display it here, neither is this monograph intended as a comparative study. The following is included to indicate the presuppositions brought to the reading of the Gospels.[119] The Hebrew Bible is of particular importance as the OT of Biblical theology. However, diachronic analysis of the OT material is not directly relevant for that which it is used for here, a text which feeds the piety of the 1st century community. The question is rather: what praxis and themes did the early Christian community see it pertinent to refer to and to continue from this

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[114] So Harrington 1991, 97–98; Ostmeyer 2004, 320. 'Our Father' is used in place of 'Lord's Prayer' to emphasise that it is not presented as a prayer that Jesus prayed himself. Cf. the latin *Pater Noster*, or the German *Vaterunser*. The content and tone, which is similar to the *Amidah* and the *Qaddish*, would be familiar to a first century Jew. However, such an early date cannot be established for these prayers. Cf. Zahavy 1990, 40–41; Levine 2000, 528. The *Amidah* was the prayer required to be said at the fixed times of prayer in the rabbinical material. Cf. m. Ber 4.

[115] For an introduction to the sources on prayer from the second Temple era cf. Flusser 1984, 551–577; Charlesworth 1986, 411–436. It has been argued that the importance of prayer increased in this time-period. So Auvinen 2003, 39. Cf. also Johnson 1948, 60; Reif 1993, 46; VanderKam 2001, 210. This might have been the case, but from the evidence it can only be concluded that the literal depiction of prayer is more common in this time-period than earlier ones. Some important prayers include the Prayer of Mordecai; the Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three young Men; Prayer of Manasseh; Jdt 4:9–13; 6:18–19; 7:19; 1 Mac 3:44–50; 4:40; 5:31–33; 11:71; 2 Mac 3:18–22; 8:2–3; 8:14–15; 10:16–26; 11:6; 13:12; 3 Mac 1:16–25; 2:1–20; 4:1–10; 5:6–9; 4 Mac 4:9.

[116] Cf. the Festival prayers (4Q507–508), Words of the Luminaries (4Q504, 506), Daily Prayers (4Q503), Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (4Q400–407; 11Q17), Hodayot (4Q427–432).

[117] In the rabbinical material prayer came to take the role of a spiritual sacrifice, with strict regulations. Zahavy 1987, 1.

[118] Even Bousset affirmed this as indispensable. Bousset 1892, 6. For a discussion of 'worship' in a context close to the NT, that of Philo, cf. Leonhardt 2001.

[119] In much I follow the presentation laid out in Auvinen 2003, 38–116. I recognise the many Hellenistic elements of 1st century Judaism. Hengel 2003.

received tradition? The description of this material can be divided into sections on the physical aspects of prayer and the basis on which prayer is offered.

A number of bodily aspects of prayer are described in the sources. In all the material the common postures of prayer are standing with hands outstretched towards heaven, and prostrated (representative texts include Gen 18:22; Ex 9:29; 1 Kgs 8:22; Ps 119:48; Jdt 9:1; 2 Mac 3:15; Jub 1:18–19).[120] Kneeling is attested relatively infrequently. The place of prayer above all else is the Temple. The OT depicts a gradual progress towards the Temple in Jerusalem as a unified focus of piety (cf. for instance 1 Kgs 8:22–30; Ps 11:4; 24:3; 28:2; Is 56:7; Dan 6:11). This emphasis is also continued in the early Jewish literature.[121] 1 Mac 7:36–37 reads as follows: "Thereupon the priests went in and stood facing the altar and the temple. They wept and said: 'Thou didst choose this house to bear thy name, to be the house of prayer and supplication for thy people.' "[122] The Dead Sea Scrolls and also the literature that has been affected by the destruction of the Temple show more ambiguity on this matter, as does the NT. In the Second Temple period, and possibly before it, there were additional houses designated for prayer (προσευχή).[123] Yet, the central importance of the Temple is shown in the tradition of praying towards Jerusalem and its Temple, even after its destruction (*m. Ber* 4:5–6).

As concerns the time of prayer it can be observed that there are descriptions of both free and fixed occasions for prayer. The prose texts of the OT mostly describe occasional prayers uttered in the face of specific situations.[124] However, a number of Psalms (Pss 5:4; 55:17; 142:2) and other material (1 Kgs 18:36; Ezra 9:4–5; Dan 6:11) hint at what should be interpreted as relatively fixed times of prayer. The early Jewish literature continues in the same vein, with more material on fixed times of prayer (Jdt 12:6–8; 13:3; *Pss. Sol.* 6:4). In this body of material there is stronger evidence than in the OT that the hours of sacrifice, morning and evening, where thought to be appropriate times for prayer (Jdt 9:1; Acts 3:1; 10:30). A

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120 Cf. Auvinen 2003, 61–64.

121 Reif 1993, 45–46.

122 Cf. Likewise 3 Mac 2:10; 4 Mac 4:9; Jdt 4:11; Sir 50:1–21; Josephus' *C. Ap* 2:196.

123 Cf. Josephus' *C. Ap* 1:208–209; *Vita* 295; A. J. 14:256–264; Philo's *Flacc.* 40–55. Cf. McKay 1994, 67–70, 236. The relation to συναγωγή is hard to establish. Cf. Auvinen 2003, 48–49.

124 Cf. Greenberg 1983, 7; Reventlow 1986, 87–118; Balentine 1993, 115–116.

common Sabbath prayer is also hinted at in *L.A.B.* 11:8.[125] Altogether, it is probable that most devout Jews adhered to a communal Sabbath prayer, an hour of prayer in the morning, and one in the afternoon.[126] In Qumran the picture is different, here there is direct evidence of strictly regulated prayer-times (1QM14:12–14; 1QS9:26–10:2; 1QH[a] 20:4–11) following the rising and setting of the sun. Blessings before eating are evident in Qumran and the rabbinical material (4Q434; *m. Ber* 6, 7).

The covenant between God and his people is the basis on which prayer is offered and answered in all the material. God answers prayers because he is faithful to his covenant (Ex 2:24–25; 32:12–13; Ps 89).[127] The pray-er appeals to the character of God ("loving kindness" חסד Pss 6:5; 25:7; 51:3 Neh 13:22, "righteousness" Dan 9:7, "mercifulness" Dan 9:9, 18; Ps 51:3) and his deeds of old (Ex 32:12–13; Jdt 9:2, 13; Tob 8:16–17; 3 Mac 6:4–8; Bar 2:11–14; 4Q504; 11Q5). The pray-ers on their side must be 'righteous' for prayer to be answered. Some pray-ers appeal to their merits before God (2 Kgs 20:2; Is 38:3, Neh 5:19; Pss 26:1–3; 86:2). Others again take a posture of humble repentance which in turn leads to an answer (1 Kgs 21:29; 2 Chr 7:14; 22:19; 33:12–13; 34:27). A number of pray-ers appear to have a special rapport with God on account of their righteous character (Noah Gen 6:9, Abraham Gen 15:6, Moses Ex 33:17, Samuel 1 Sam 1:24–28; 3:1–21, Jeremiah Jer 7:16; 11:14; 14:11, Daniel Dan 6, and Job Job 1:8). A division according to the righteousness of the pray-er is seen in some later Jewish literature (Ps. Sol 1:2; 6:5; Jub 41:23–26; *Let. Aris.* 18, 192; Sir 2:7–10; 3:5; 15:10; 28:2; 35:16–17). To this picture could be added the attitude of persistence (Is 62:1–7; Sir 7:10; *t. Ber* 3:20).

Christology, the understanding of the Messiah, was a central element that set the Jewish-Christians apart from other Jewish sects. An early Christ-devotion lies at the basis of the Gospels.[128] A basic "Christian" creed as found for instance in 1 Cor 15:3–4 seems to be presupposed in the Gospels. This is especially obvious in those instances where the texts use irony to bring across a point.[129] The audience knows more about Jesus

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[125] I follow Harrington's argument that the *L.A.B* is from Palestine before the destruction of the Temple. Harrington 1985, 298–300.

[126] Prayer twice a day: Ezra 9:5; Dan 9:21; Jdt 9:1; Pss. Sol. 6:4; Josephus *A.J.* 4:212.; 4Q 503. So Auvinen 2003, 55. Prayer three times a day: Ps 55:17; Dan 6:10. So George 1953, 31–89; Jeremias 1967, 75; For praying early cf. Ps 5:3; 88:13.

[127] Balentine 1993, 22. Auvinen 2003, 95–99.

[128] As described by Hurtado 2003.

[129] Irony invites the reader to "leap to the higher level and share the perspective of the implied author." Culpepper 1983, 167. Irony is here defined with Muecke as "a) a contrast

than the characters of the narrative. All the Gospels work with an implied audience that knows the outcome of the narrative, and the claims made concerning Jesus. The Gospels are religious texts 'designed' for intensive re-use, and they communicate at a different level than what is said directly in the narrative. For instance the audience knows that Jesus is no ghost when he walks on water (Mk 6:49), or that his flesh which they are called to eat is symbolical of the Eucharist and his death (Jn 6:52–66). The Christology is also important in the prayer material of the Gospels. This means that whilst the piety is basically Jewish it includes elements that would be unacceptable to other Jewish groups. The 'Jewish-Christians' follow Jesus to the extent that their prayers are associated with his character (as will be seen, this is done in different ways in the different Gospels).

With the high amount of communication designed for an audience competent in the Christian claims the texts must be seen as primarily intra-community productions. Arguments have been made in support of a general readership for the Gospels.[130] This would of course seem to be implied by the ultimate claims made. The Gospels claim to be true; for *all*. The very fact that the oral traditions were written down do suppose a wider intent.[131] It is true that the four Gospels all originated in a missionary movement.[132] Yet, in light of the high amount of implicit communication the texts themselves communicate primarily to 'Christians.'[133] This can for instance be seen in the inclusion of passages which speak of judgment over the community, the insiders, in Matthew (22:14; 24: 45–51). Moreover, the Gospels are primarily communal addresses, not individual psychological ones.[134] As regards the prayer texts it can also be observed that the Our Father early came to be seen as a text reserved for the initiated.[135] The implicit communication provides a 'normative' interpretation

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of appearance and reality, b) a confident unawareness that the appearance is only an appearance, c) the comic effect of this unawareness of a contrasting appearance and reality." Muecke 1969, 19–20.

[130] Moule reads all four Gospels as "evangelistic and apologetic" with outsiders in view. Moule 1967, 100–114.

[131] So Alexander 1998, 100.

[132] Marshall argues that the whole NT has a missionary pattern. Marshall 2004. For Jn cf. Okure 1988; Köstenberger 1998.

[133] So Esler 1987, 24–26; Hurtado 2003, 273. For Mark: Best 1983, 18–20; Marcus 2000, 25; Boring 2006, 9. Bauckham argues for a large "Christian" audience. Bauckham 1998, 9–48. Klink argues the same for John. Klink 2007, 255.

[134] Yoder 1971, 107–124. Remembering Stendahl's warning concerning the "introspective consciousness" of the West. Stendahl 1963, 199–215.

[135] So Manson 1955, 100–101; Jeremias 1967, 85. In the earliest church the Our Father was only taught to the baptised. Cf. *Const Ap* 7:45. John Chrysostom *Hom Col 6:4*. Cf. the *Didache* with baptismal catechesis in ch. 7, the Our Father ch. 8, Eucharist ch. 9.

of the OT tradition and the running narrative itself. More than that, it constructs and sustains a normative community praxis centered on the character of Jesus.[136]

Method

In this section I will present how the above discussions come together in a specific approach to the texts.[137] The goal of the exegesis is a theological description of the ideal pray-er, the human part of the putative divine-human interchange. This is a task that focuses on the meaning of the texts, and is in that sense at the top of a hierarchy of approaches. It is therefore synthetic and eclectic, depending on findings in a number of different areas to say something of the whole. The end goal is a theological and canonical description of the human at prayer and the exegesis is therefore predisposed towards providing material for such a task.[138]

Throughout I will conduct a text-centred analysis of one particular aspect of the texts in question, the construal of humans at prayer. In the exegetical parts of the monograph I analyse the biblical material on prayer in a number of contexts that come together to produce meaningful communication, primarily the internal literary context of each Gospel.[139] Historical aspects are not seen as external to the theological goal of the exegesis, they serve as support in the analysis.[140] The text-centred approach depends on the checks provided by historical evidence.[141] The analysis will at times require that the best text be established, or that a word, concept

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[136] As will be seen, the teaching is not only *paraenesis* (exhortation to continue a way of life) or *protrepsis* (exhortation to enter a new mode of life). In the Gospels the teaching is inseparable from the relation to Jesus. Cf. Stowers 1986, 92.

[137] The thought that a method reveals, or even produces, truth is derived from the natural sciences. The theological task, envisaged broadly within the humanities, is here perceived of differently. Cf. Louth 1983, 102.

[138] Many important questions must by necessity be left to the side.

[139] "Literary criticism deals with the interpretation and evaluation of a literary work through the careful examination and analysis of the work itself on the basis of both *internal* factors (e.g., genre, structure, content, style, sources) and *external* factors (e.g., historical setting, social setting, biographical data, psychological information)." Aune 1987, 18. For similar arguments integrating literary and historical aspects cf. Lapointe 1971, 469–487; Kingsbury 1988, 459; Ashton 1993, 382; Robbins, 1992, xxiv; Stibbe 1992; Watt 2000, 12; Dunn 2003, 119.

[140] Theologically speaking such a mode of enquiry is necessitated by the incarnational basis of the Christian faith. The ostensive reference of the text is fundamental to its meaning. The thought of a *sensus literalis* as the basis of theology is thereby retained.

[141] However, matters of redaction and source history will only be treated in the footnotes.

or praxis is set in its historical context.[142] However, the main focus is the communicative act of the text itself, not historical reconstructions based upon it.[143] The claims of the text also include an audience *before* the text, yet this step is only taken in so far as such a one is constructed *in* the text, an implied audience. This implied audience is understood as a first century Jewish-Christian audience as laid out above.[144]

The exegesis describes the texts' rendition of the ideal pray-er, one part of the 'implied audience.' The exegetical work focuses on:

1. The construction of the ideal pray-er in the four Gospels
2. The description of the ideal pray-er in the four Gospels

These aspects are referred to at the end of each chapter and in the final conclusion. In the following two paragraphs I will further elaborate upon each point.

The 'ideal prayer' is *constructed* with a number of strategies that together elicit a response from the (implied) audience. Some passages contribute to this indirectly, whilst others are more explicit. A number of strategies used in the construction of an ideal pray-er can be singled out for special attention. They fill different communicative functions in the construction of an ideal pray-er. Each Gospel draws on the following aspects: a) teaching by Jesus, b) paradigmatic and unique aspects of the character of Jesus, c) ideals from the Old Testament, d) play on pre-knowledge, e) narrative progression, f) characterisation, and g) eschatology.[145] It can be observed that some of these are what can be called narrative aspects of the text (b, e and f), whilst some refer to a larger narrative outside the texts (c, d, g). The teaching (a) is, as will be seen, integrated with the character of Jesus.

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[142] Moreover, I contend with a number of thinkers that historical understanding can in many ways be understood as the construction of a narrative. Cf. Gadamer: "historical understanding proves to be a kind of literary criticism writ large." Gadamer 2004, 335.

[143] Following Culpepper 1983, 11.

[144] This Jewish-Christian context is central in the task of describing how the Christ event came to be understood in light of the HB/OT.

[145] For analysis of characterisation cf. Harvey 1965; Chatman 1978; Docherty 1983; Hochman 1985. One of the reasons I have not used a set model of characterisation in the exegesis is the fact that such models by necessity would impress too strong a pattern on the resulting description of anthropology. For instance: Aristotle saw characters as expressions of "the action," stressing a monistic ontology. Cf. Aristotle's *Poet.* 1450a. In Structuralism characters are expressions of basic linguistic structures. Cf. Bal 1985, 79–93. Deconstruction works with a notion of the absent character or instances of subjectivity. Cf. Docherty 1983, xv. For a more complete bibliography see Resseguie 2005, 122–123 n. 2. For an analysis of characterisation in Biblical exegesis cf. Rhoads and Michie 1982; Culpepper 1983; Darr 1992; Burnett 1993; Rhoads and Syreni 1999; Malbon 2000.

These aspects are read together to analyse the communicative event of the prayer texts. In the conclusion to each exegetical chapter I will return to these points to summarise their place in the Gospel in question. They are also repeated in the conclusion, there with reference to the canonical picture of prayer.

As a result of the above mentioned analysis a *description* of the ideal pray-er can be produced. This task will include a description of words to be uttered in prayer, and of the understanding of what prayer entails. For each Gospel I conclude by relating prayer to two theological "themes." These are aspects that in the exegetical work on prayer have been found to characterise the piety of that Gospel, the immediate theological context of the prayer material. The description of the human predicament remains a main emphasis. Speaking of the representation of human characters and ideals is an anthropological endeavour. However, the Gospels do not offer a self-contained anthropology. Humans are only described in relation to God, and the 'Christ event.'[146] On this account exactly an analysis of the interchange with God provides material for some further reflections on the anthropology of the texts.[147]

Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 are each devoted to the prayer material in one of the four canonical Gospels. The exegesis follows a running commentary style in order to describe the progressive development of the aspect of prayer. The Gospels are divided into narrative sections, each with concluding comments on the narrative progression. Each exegetical chapter ends with a synthetic discussion of the *construction* and *description* of the ideal pray-er. In each chapter the distinctives and particular strategies are emphasised without an attempt at harmonisation (whether historical or conceptual).[148] In contrast, chapter six treats the various materials on prayer in a canonical setting, also drawing on further theological and philosophical resources. The four Gospels constitute a body of texts that construct a particular piety—*together*.

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[146] The "Christ event" remains the presupposition of a Gospel anthropology. Schnelle 1996, 5.

[147] I will not produce a full NT anthropology from the angle of the prayer-material, only provide some material for such an endeavour.

[148] A thematic study can be a good way to bring out differences.

CHAPTER TWO

MATTHEW

Introduction

With the prominent place given to teaching discourses Matthew stands out among the canonical Gospels (cf. 5:1–7:29; 10:1–11:1; 13:1–53; 18:1–35; 24:1–25:46).[1] This focus on teaching means that ideals are developed more explicitly than for instance in Mark. Certainly, this implies an ideal of study in the wider sense.[2] At the same time the teaching also develops a 'righteousness.' As will be seen prayer is central in the teaching and in the response to Jesus which Matthew seeks to elicit in the audience.

A number of different suggestions have been given as to Matthew's overall structure. Some propose a geographical base.[3] Others have suggested a division into three stages of Christological development: The person, proclamation and passion of Jesus the Messiah (divided by Ἀπο τότε ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς in 4:17 and 16:21).[4] Due to the similar ending of five major discourses ("when Jesus finished all these sayings" 7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1), it has been proposed that the Gospel follows a fivefold structure surrounding them.[5] If more attention is paid to the narrative, this observation is seen as a succession of narrative and discourse material.[6] Although distinctions seem to be made within the material, the lines drawn are overlapping. It can be observed that the narrative progression does not carry the same weight as in Mark or Luke. By this I mean that the narrative succession of scenes is less progressive (in this Mt tends more towards Jn). Compared to the other Synoptics Matthew is also more explicit about Jesus continued presence with his followers (1:23; 18:20). The result is that, compared to Mark and Luke, the whole is more in view at all stages of the narrative. In

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[1] Teaching carries a structural role in Matthew. So Meier 1979, 45–48; Kingsbury 1988, 105.

[2] Viviano shows how Torah-study could be seen as worship to the authors of the *Pirqe 'Abot*, and also in the Synoptic Gospels. Cf. Viviano 1978, 158–195.

[3] McNeile 1915.

[4] Kingsbury 1975; Kingsbury 1988. Cf. also Stonehouse 1944, 129–131; Lohmeyer 1956; Krenz 1964.

[5] Bacon 1918; Bacon 1930.

[6] Allison 1992, 1208.

that sense the implied reader is constructed closer to the surface level of the narrative. Still, a basic twofold division between the ministry of Jesus and the passion of Jesus will be followed. This twofold division basically explains first, who Jesus is, and second, why he had to suffer.

Ministry Narrative 4:1–25:46

4:10 The Temptation of Jesus

This passage sees the first explicit mention of devotion (προσκυνέω) in Matthew.[7] True, the wise men/magicians fell down before the child in Bethlehem (2:11 πεσόντες—πίπτω). However, the use of the word "devotion/worship" in that scene should be seen to refer to an act of homage rather than to explicit worship.[8] The men came to honour the king of the Jews (2:2). Certainly the audience knows just how fitting that is, but this is insider information implicitly addressing them. It is not clear to the characters of the narrative at this stage. Arguably, the term is used with a certain progression within the narrative. A more general use (8:2; 9:18; 15:25; 20:20) gives way to more explicit worship of Jesus in the later part of the narrative (28:9, 17; cf. though 14:33). A Christological argument must be implied as Jesus wards off his last and final temptation through citing the *Shema*, "you shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve" (4:10 using προσκυνέω and λατρεύω from the LXX Deut 6:13). Luke uses a different order, with the temptation to worship the devil being placed second. The effect is to set the tone for the Matthean presentation of piety.

The devil (ὁ διάβολος) is here characterised as Jesus' major opponent (antagonist), and given an active role in the narrative (as in Amos 3:5–6; Job 1:6–12; 2:1–6). Indirectly this role is ordained by God, who led Jesus into the wilderness by the Spirit "in order to be tempted" (πειρασθῆναι final inf). The devil is given the function of opposing God's word through alternative interpretations (as in Gen 3:1; Mt 13:39). The construction sets up a strong dualism between various interpretations (cf. further 16:23 "get behind me Satan"). In this setup there seems to be no middle ground, the choice is either 'God' or 'the devil.' Jesus is given the choice of worshipping

[7] The historical origin of the scene lies outside the argument of this work.

[8] In the cultural context of the text the term is used for an act of reverence commonly shown to "social superiors." Hurtado 2003, 38.

the devil, but answers with the *Shema*. As will be seen this basis of Jewish piety can be thought to be central in the later teaching on prayer. Matthew argues that praying as Jesus teaches avoids idolatry.

The scene works with a number of ideals. Jesus is a faithful interpreter of the tradition (26:53) and a faithful servant of God.[9] In one sense he is presented as a Messiah who has come to do what Israel did not achieve (Deut 8:2). In the reference to fasting, Matthew constructs an ascetic ideal, which is continued throughout the narrative (sexual abstention 5:28; 19:12, fasting 6:16–18; 9:15). Jesus is in this scene paralleled to the types of Moses and Elijah who both fasted for forty days (Ex 24:18; 34:28; Deut 9:9–11; 10:10; 1 Kg 19:8).[10] As the Son, Jesus is unique in his relation to the Father (3:17), he is uniquely faithful. At the same time Matthew later presents Jesus as a paradigm of overcoming temptation through prayer. This is especially clear in the Gethsemane scene (26:41). For the implied audience it is clear that temptation can be overcome through praying as Jesus taught, in the continued presence of Jesus (18:20; 28:20).[11] In this context of repeated readings, with knowledge of the whole, the scene becomes a paradigm.

The possibility of being tempted demonstrates a part of the Matthean view of humans. Jesus' temptation is initiated by God. This is in agreement with many OT narratives, with that of Job being the prime example. There it is a test of faithfulness. The ability to be tempted points to a basic dualism within the human person corresponding to the dualism evident at the narrative level between God and the devil. There is a 'quality' in the human person that is capable of being tempted (cf. the later use of "flesh" and "spirit" in 26:41). Here these qualities are first connected to physical needs like food, attention and security which are valued as less important than the 'relation' to God.[12] This is in line with the ascetic ideal already mentioned. Jesus is an example of seeking the kingdom first (6:33). The highpoint of the temptation is the call to worship the devil. This is giving to others that which is only due to God. On this account the temptation scene is summarised in the *Shema* which also sets the theocentric agenda for the Matthean prayer-teaching.

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[9] Historical reconstructions have attempted to read the scene as a correction of *Theios aner* (θειος ἀνέρ) and political messiah Christologies. Cf. Luz 2002, 222. For a convincing critique of this approach cf. Holladay 1977.

[10] Allison displays the similarities to Moses. Cf. Allison 1993, 166–172.

[11] More so than the 'Spirit' which Paul and Luke sees as the power in Christian life. See though 3:11; 10:20.

[12] The temptation scene emphasises exactly the danger of identifying humans with "seinen äusseren Triebbedürfnissen." Drewermann 1992, 341.

5:1–7:29 Sermon on the Mount

The Sermon on the Mount is the first and most extensive of Matthew's teaching discourses. The characterisation of Jesus includes allusions to Moses and the giving of the law (cf. 5:1 "going up" and 8:1 "descending" cf. also 7:12). However, here it is Jesus who gives the "law" and the disciples who receive it. The passage is highly significant as the disciples are later called to teach "his commands" (28:20). In the sermon Jesus outlines a righteous life (5:17–20). As will be seen prayer is a central element in this outline. The teaching speaks to the characters of the narrative (5:1) and equally to the implied audience as contemporary followers of Jesus. Here Jesus, as *the* normative religious teacher, instructs on a better righteousness (5:20). In what follows I will briefly discuss the outline of the sermon as it relates to prayer.

A number of scholars argue that the Our Father is the conceptual or generative centre of The Sermon on the Mount.[13] Frequently the argument is made that the divergent material of 6:19–7:11 is an interpretation of the Our Father.[14] To Bornkamm, 6:19–24 unpacks the three first petitions, 6:25–34 speaks on the fourth petition, 7:1–5 relates to the petition of forgiveness, 7:6 comments on the sixth and seventh petitions, which he sees as dealing with apostasy and faithfulness.[15] The passage in 7:7–11 thus serves as a natural conclusion to the teaching on prayer and actually concludes the section started in 5:17. Although the exegesis is somewhat forced at times (6:13 juxtaposed with 7:6, and the place of the threefold depiction of piety as almsgiving, prayer and fasting), the argument of an inherent connection between the prayer and the material running up to 7:11 is sound. Kiley agrees with Bornkamm and has expanded his argument to include most of the so-called M material of the Gospel. He uses this material to see "select sayings in the sermon as a commentary on the prayer."[16] This shows that there is a thematic coherence between the prayer and much material that is thought to be distinctly Matthean (M). Luz' suggestion of a progression of frame structures starting at 4:23 and ending at 9:35, centred on the prayer of 6:9–13 seems more reasonable than Bornkamm's as it includes material prior to the prayer in a larger

[13] Jeremias 1967, 63, 99–107; Schweizer 1975, 202–203; Hendrickx 1984, 108, 128–129; Kingsbury 1987, 131–143; Luz 1989, 352.

[14] Giavini 1965, 171–177. Cf. likewise Guelich 1982; Stanton 1992, 298.

[15] Bornkamm 1978, 419–432.

[16] Kiley 1994, 15. O'Neil unconvincingly reads 'The Lord's Prayer' as a collection of short prayers of Jesus. O'Neill 1993, 3–25.

chiasm.[17] Altogether, reading the prayer as the centre of the sermon seems warranted.

If Matthew uses the Our Father as the centre of the Sermon on the Mount the ethics are in a sense understood as a direct outworking of the relation to God. It is not a prerequisite of a relation to God, but understood as part of a dialogically developed relationship. On one hand there are demands evident in the "perfect" character of God, which the audience is to be like (5:48). On the other hand God gives 'righteousness' in answer to prayer (6:9–11). As will be seen, the Matthean prayer-teaching is a tension between the two. Arguably prayer, as a relation to God, is used also as the theological centre of the sermon. The followers of Jesus worship and serve God (4:10). They do this through asking for his will to be done (6:10; 26:39). It is clear that the sermon is information for insiders.[18] In the sermon the teaching is addressed to the disciples (5:1b) whilst the crowd and the audience remain "potential disciples."[19] Through the paraenetic emphasis of Matthew there is a strong drive to make the audience accept Christ through accepting his teachings. In that sense Matthew construes Jesus as both the source of the demands and the solution to the ethics in question.[20] Prayer is a central part of the righteousness called for.[21] In prayer Jesus' teaching is appropriated. The implied audience is made to enter the circle of demands and promises through the act of prayer.[22]

In the antitheses Matthew sets out the 'better' righteousness of the disciples (cf. 5:17–48). The argument progressively circles in on the characteristics of the disciples through contrast to other groups. The call to be salt and light of 5:13–14 refers to the earth (γῆ) and to the world (κόσμος). The net is cast closer in 5:47 and 6:7, 32; where Jesus' followers are contrasted to "the Gentiles." There is further distinction in the six antitheses which draw lines vis-à-vis certain groups within Judaism, the reference to

[17] Luz 2002, 254.

[18] Byrskog 1994, 225.

[19] Byrskog 1994, 225. cf. the emphatic use of ὑμεῖς in 5:13–14. ὀλιγόπιστοι in 6:30 is a Matthean term for the disciples, and ἀδελφός is used throughout.

[20] Cf. Luz 2002, 255. Matthew emphasises the continued presence of Jesus, not the Spirit as such.

[21] In that sense the δικαιοσύνη is not a works-righteousness as used by Paul. Cf. Luz 2002, 504.

[22] "Religions both respond to and create needs." Meeks 1983, 184.

heathens in 5:47 only adds emphasis.[23] The rhetorical use of "I say to you" addresses the audience directly.[24]

The antitheses starting in 5:21 move into more and more demanding ideals, culminating in 5:44 on the character of God. "Those from whom you have heard it was said" (v. 43) is used as a contrast to Jesus' teaching. As in the temptation story, conflict over correct interpretation carries a structural role (cf. also Mt 15). The first part of the 'teaching' in v. 43 is from Lev 19:18, "love your neighbour." "Hate your enemy" is not accounted for and is the section opposed by Jesus. The whole scene characterises Jesus as a normative interpreter of the law who works to see it fulfilled more effectively (5:17–20). This places him on the side of God who is the Giver of the law—i.e. the Initiator of the covenant. The two step process of discarding some common tradition and then redirecting the follower to Jesus' words depicts a community defined by his teaching.

The concluding highpoint of the antitheses is the call to love enemies (v. 44).[25] This love is in part to be expressed in the act of praying (a parallel construction).[26] Such love is patterned on the Father who "sends rain on the just and the unjust." The result is to appeal to the character of the Father as the basis of the righteousness the followers of Jesus are called to. The Father is "perfect," and his children likewise (τέλειος v. 48). That Luke uses "merciful" in the parallel displays the different tone of Matthew (Lk 6:36). Matthew uses God as an ethical ideal which the disciples should conform to.[27] In Matthew the ideal of God's love is used as the highpoint of the antitheses. The disciples 'must' love, since children do like their parents by nature. The sonship of the disciples results in a new and "better" ethics (cf. the use of "your Father" in v. 45). The unattainable ideal of God sets the pray-ers on a track of never-ending 'progression.'[28] Through this kinship language, a covenantal construction, the tradition is used as a personal address from 'the Father.' Failures to appropriate it are taken as a personal affront against God.

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[23] Fornberg argues that the opponents are Shammaites. Fornberg 1988, 11–31. The mnemonic outline is similar to the *Mishna*. Neusner 1985.

[24] Cf. Aune 1983, 164–165; Kingsbury 1988, 110.

[25] Luz 2002, 307.

[26] The ὑπέρ could in fact be thought to connote "on behalf of."

[27] On God as an ideal in Jewish and early Christian thinking cf. Marmorstein 1950, 106–121; Betz 1967, 84–101, 107–136.

[28] Cf. France 2007, 228. n. 166. "However completely the rules may be kept, 'perfection' (understood in the relation to the nature of God) remains a goal, not an achievement."

That Matthew argues that it is the better righteousness as such which makes the disciples God's children is unlikely. The Gospel has a focus on the saving acts of Jesus that is too strong for this to be the case (26:28). For Matthew the 'sonship' of the disciples carries soteriological connotations.[29] This can also be inferred from the prayer address "Father" which the followers of Jesus can use on account of him enabling a new relation to God ("your Father in heaven" 6:1, 9; 7:11; 18:14). At the same time there is a response-inviting demand built into the construction. The disciples are in a position not to love their enemies. This would of course disqualify them from being sons of their Father.[30] There is then in Matthew a strong emphasis on the ethical implications of being a follower of Jesus. Opting out of discipleship is an actual possibility.

Some further comments on the anthropology of the passage in question can be made. The all-encompassing love of the Father allows for the existence and acts of the evil other, so also for his children. The use of "enemy" is transparent and sets up a general principle. It is prayer done despite persecution that expresses sonship. Persecution thus functions positively as an occasion for expressing sonship.[31] In praying for enemies the pray-ers can be thought to include also them within their relation to the Father. For the pray-er the enemies are not external to God's work in the world. However, the construction could also be thought to rely on defining a group as enemies. Furthermore, it also makes such a negative 'other' necessary for the identity of the Matthean group. The obvious problem in such an ideal ethics is clear in the harsh words concerning the Pharisees and scribes (especially ch. 23).

As already noted the teaching on prayer (6:1–18) is the highpoint of the central part of the sermon (5:21–7:11).[32] The discussion of almsgiving, prayer and fasting can be seen as a way of summarising a part of contemporary Jewish piety (6:1–18; So Tob 12:8).[33] Whether it should be seen as a summary of general Jewish piety is a different question.[34] There are

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[29] Cf. Deines 2004, 1–39.

[30] Cf. John's call to remain in Christ Jn 15:1–10. Lips argues for a singleminded direction of all acts towards God, not an ethical perfection. Lips 1998, 306.

[31] On the sociological level prayer maintains group cohesion and individual worth.

[32] Luz 2002, 254.

[33] Betz 1975, 445–457; Luz 2002, 420–421. Cf. also Harrington 1991, 97.

[34] Haenchen thinks it is. Haenchen 1966, 117. Keener points out that the rabbis also mentioned other duties. Keener 1999, 207. For the Jewish background of the Our Father. cf. Abrahams 1923; Heinnemann 1977; Petuchowski and Brocke 1978; Finkel 1981, 131–169; Lapide 1991.

no references to the Temple in this teaching, even in contexts of sin and its forgiveness. However, this would not be unheard of in contemporary Judaism (cf. John the Baptist). Like the earlier antitheses, the teaching on these three areas draws up patterns that define the disciples in their religious surrounding. The teaching highlights the personal aspect of piety (6:1).[35] The righteousness which the disciples are to display cannot consist only in ostentatious acts (5:20; 21–48), but in inner motivation and what Matthew conceives of as a 'true' relationship to God.[36] The way motivation is called into question could suggest a form of introspection. This is not to say that the individual is ever thought of as separated from the people of God and communal aspects (cf. 6:9 and 18:19–20). Still, the focus is not on the religious functions of the Temple. To be a disciple of Jesus is to pray as Jesus teaches.

The use of contrastive characterisation seen in the antitheses is carried on in vv. 5–8 which exposes an 'anti-character,' or opposite to the ideal. The reference to the hyperbolical "hypocrites" and "the peoples/heathens" (οἱ ἐθνικοί) distinguishes the disciples in their religious context.[37] Here Jesus calls his followers "not to be like them" (v. 8). This is not to say that Jesus is portrayed as rejecting all religious praxis of his day. He prays the Passover *Hallel* (26:30), he prays before meals, prostrates in prayer (26:39), and argues for corporate prayer (18:19–20; 21:22; 26:41 plural verbs).[38] The argument should rather be seen as a comment on the execution of prayer. The followers of Jesus are differentiated from "hypocrites" who pray only to impact onlookers (cf. Lk 18:9–14). This is used to present prayer "in secret" as ideal (6:6 εἰσελθε εἰς τὸ ταμεῖόν σου καί κλείσας τὴν θύραν σου cf. Is 26:20; Mt 14:23). The "gentile" is at fault because of an approach that also undermines communication. The words used bring to mind a constant repetition (v. 7 βατταλογήσητε and τῇ πολυλογίᾳ).[39] This contrast construes the Matthean prayer-praxis as a "relationship" to a personal Father (cf. 7:7–9). There are echoes here of the OT ridicule of other religions (cf. Elijah and the Baal prophets 1 Kgs 18:26–29). Closer at hand are the repetitive and verbose practices of mystery cults where divine

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35 This corresponds to the fact that the *Shema* and *Tefillah* would normally be said by individuals on their own. So Bradshaw 2002, 39.

36 Luz 2002, 428.

37 Perrone 2003, 267. Cf. also Gerhardsson 1984, 208; Finkel 1981, 133.

38 The prayer in 6:9–13 shows parallels to the *Qaddish* (first textually attested in the 9th century Siddur of Rab Amram Gaon).

39 So Albright and Mann 1971, 75. On fatiguing the gods cf. Tacitus Hist. 1:20. For prayer in the Greek 'pagan' tradition Cf. Pulleyn 1998. See also Kiley 1997.

names are uttered to implore and even control the gods.[40] Sandwiched in between the two negative characters is a response-inviting passage on the Father's answer (v. 6 ὁ πατήρ . . . ἀποδώσει σοι). Together the two anti-ideals serve to construct ideal prayer as intelligible communication that uses words and language in a manner comparable to interpersonal human communication.

The connection between v. 8b and 9a is easy to miss, but is of major significance in the characterisation of God.[41] It is also a *crux interpretum* in the Matthean understanding of the 'ideal pray-er.' To Matthew the "Father knows what you need before you ask him" (v. 8b). Still the very next verse starts with a call to pray. Likewise, the teaching in 6:24–34 is a call not to worry about the circumstances of life. Yet, the prayer text sets out the normative needs of the ideal pray-er. In this, prayer is presented as the opposite of worrying. The needs will be met when presented in petitions to God. This semantical response-inviting construction presents God as a character who genuinely wants the prayers of the ideal pray-er. It is also a continuation of 4:10 and the call of the *Shema* to worship and serve God alone, who is the one who meets the needs. The eagerly responding God is part of an OT tradition which includes Is 65:24 ("Before they call I will answer"). This dynamic develops a dialogical picture of the divine-human communication. In Matthew God is not presented as a disinterested God the pray-er approaches to have certain needs met. Rather, a picture is constructed in which God knows the pray-er and seeks dialogue. The pray-er *must* pray if God's good gifts are to be received. This picture functions as a powerful incentive to pray; and to see that prayer as a relationship to God.[42] Prayer is seen as important in itself.[43] The act is a performance of tradition that makes life a relation to a personal God. The piety is in that sense directly theological. Moreover, in Matthew, human needs are basic to creatureliness, as defined by God. The picture of God determines the true needs of humans.

In order to prepare for the exegesis of verses 9–13 a particular aspect of referentiality and eschatology must be discussed. Interpreters like Raymond Brown and Krister Stendahl insist that all the petitions are

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[40] Cf. Burkert 1985, 74; Garland 1993, 79.

[41] The source and redaction critical issues are not directly relevant for the *effect* of the present text.

[42] Cullmann 1995, 20.

[43] "Prayer is perfect activity because it is done for no other purpose than itself." Hauerwas 2006, 76.

eschatological in the strict future sense.[44] Brown's essay is often quoted as evidence that the prayer is eschatological. He attempts to show "that the petitions of the PN [*pater noster*] do not refer to daily circumstances but to the final times."[45] Certainly this might be seen as a necessary qualification against an anachronistic over-emphasis on a (sacramentally) realised eschatology or a simplistic direct application to the personal life. Yet, it posits a far too distanced relation between the pray-er and God to fit Matthew's overall worldview. Brown's argument is mainly built on two observations: that the early Gospels (Mk and Mt) display an eschatological urgency that abates in the later Gospels (Lk and Jn) and Paul, and that all the petitions are rendered in the aorist tense which means "*Einmaligkeit*."[46]

To Brown the eschatological kingdom is only present in the teaching of Jesus, and is somehow postponed at his death.[47] Brown seems to argue that God's direct involvement with humans is limited to "the end" which temporally is not now.[48] To the contrary it can be argued that the Gospels have a conception of 'time under God,' shown by the way God works tangibly in the lives of the characters in healings, etc. Furthermore, Matthew maintains that Jesus remains present to the audience (1:23; 28:20).[49] The teachings of Jesus are also continued by his followers after the crucifixion and resurrection (28:20). As regards the aorist tense, Luz argues convincingly that it does not imply an exclusive focus on the eschaton but that the here and now is "equally possible."[50] Brown himself states that "[t]he urgency that we encountered in the fourth petition ('today') is transmitted to the aorists of the fifth petition."[51] It is the fourth petition which is hardest to interpret.[52] If "today" can be thought to qualify the remaining aorists, there is no reason why they do not deal with present reality, in fact such a suggestion is probable. To this should be added that the context

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[44] Stendahl 1962, 779; Brown 1965, 217–253.

[45] Brown 1965, 218.

[46] Brown 1965, 227–228, and *passim*.

[47] Brown 1965, 227.

[48] Even God's fatherhood and Christian sonship is eschatological and future. Brown 1965, 226.

[49] Cf. the discussion on v. 9:38 concerning the di-partite view of salvation history followed here, footnote 101.

[50] It corresponds to "the Greek style of prayer." So Luz 1989, 378.

[51] Brown 1965, 245.

[52] Brown's interpretation seems to hinge on an appraisal of the "new spirit that invests the Lord's Prayer." Brown 1965, 223. To Brown this newness is expounded in the Roman liturgy which is the best exposition of the fourth petition. Brown 1965, 243.

of the prayer is the ethics of the kingdom which is now present (12:28; 13:16–17). This must inform the understanding of the Matthean use of the prayer. On a narrative account the kingdom is present in Jesus' teaching, but Jesus still calls the disciples to pray this prayer (which on Brown's account would either be unnecessary or historically inaccurate).

The result is that although the prayer may contain reference to a *final* coming it cannot be read as referring only to the *eschaton*. The relational language Matthew uses implies a continued religious experience. The prayer relates to the present in its petition for bread, to the past in the petition for forgiveness, and to the future in the petition not to be tempted. There is also a problem with how a completely eschatological prayer might be thought to refer.[53] If there is no point of contact between the 'here' and the 'then,' there is no way of conceptualising it. Overall, the result is that the prayer balances future and present aspects.[54] Prayer is one of the clearest expressions of an already-not-yet eschatology in Matthew.

As already noted, the prayer in 6:9–13 is Jesus' central instruction on prayer.[55] It is *the* major passage in the portrayal of the Matthean ideal pray-er.[56] Actually, the passage can be seen as the direct speech of the ideal pray-er. In Matthew, Jesus the Teacher provides examples and commandments for his followers to follow. In that sense the construction of the ideal pray-er lies at the very surface of the narrative, true piety is a main theme in the narrative. The prayer consists of three petitions concerning God (in 3. person) and three which concern the pray-er (in 2. person). This general outline suggests a two-part division, one which mainly concerns God and his holiness and kingdom, and a second which speaks of the daily life of the pray-er. As will be seen, the two sections of the prayer must be read as one whole.[57] The prayer is an example of the thought that God and his 'people' are intimately connected. God and the pray-er share the same concerns. Matthew presents this as an asymmetrical relation-

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[53] 'Refer' in the linguistic sense. The hermeneutical circle implies that a question or projection must include an element of pre-knowledge, complete ignorance does not question anything.

[54] So Manson 1956, 440.

[55] Cf. Tertullian *Or.* 1. It is a "brevarium totius Evangelii." Or Cyprian *Dom. or.* 9, it is a "coelestis doctrinae compendium."

[56] Cf. Bibliographical compilations in Dorneich 1982; Carmignac 1969, 469–553; Harding 1994.

[57] Contra Philonenko who suggests that the first three are Jesus' prayers, and the rest those of his followers. Philonenko 2001.

ship where God defines all parameters of the discourse. Yet, in relation to those parameters the follower of Jesus is expected to take an active role, as is appropriate to a covenant.

A number of ideals can be singled out in the first address of v. 9, "Our Father in heaven." In using the first person plural "our," the pray-er self-refers as part of a community, rehearsing a communal identity (even behind closed doors 6:6).[58] The speech-act in itself constitutes the community it speaks of. This aspect is also implicit in the fact that prayer is presented as a learned behaviour, stemming from the community that maintains Jesus' teachings. Matthew emphasises that Jesus' relation to the Father is unique; at the baptism he was characterised as *the* Son.[59] At the same time the text communicates to the implied audience who know God through Jesus the Son. In light of the later revelations of Jesus' relationship to the Father (11:25; 26:39) the command to pray to God as Father draws on the Father-Son image to explain the disciples' relation to God. In fact, to Matthew the Father-Son relationship is more than an illustration. At other places the fatherhood of God has been used to describe the disciples' relation to him (cf. 5:16, 45, 48; 6:1, 6, 8). When the disciples follow Jesus and his teaching on prayer they share in his relationship with the Father.[60] It is after the death and resurrection of Jesus that they understand the teaching of Jesus, including that on prayer (28:20). In this context, "Father" is not used as a doctrinal definition but as an existential relational term. The mention of "Heaven" reveals a worldview where God is external to the earth, but can be implored to act.[61] This sets the stage for the delay and waiting which is characteristic of prayer. This implies a negative view of the present, yet one which is relativised by prayer. It also lays bare the temporal framework of the Matthean anthropology. The pray-er is a 'person' exactly in the temporal openendedness of an interpersonal narrative.

The prayer for hallowing (v. 9b) sets the tone for the following petitions. God's name is equivalent to his character and signifies his acts of

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[58] Jewish private prayers were often modelled on the synagogue prayers. Heinemann 1977, 51, 172.

[59] Cf. the exegesis of Mk 14:36. πάτερ should be understood as equivalent of the *Abba* found in Mk 14:36.

[60] So Jeremias 1967, 63. In the "Abba" address. So also Luz 1989, 376. Cf. France 2007, 245: "Here are the raw materials for a theological system which posits a unique filial relationship for Jesus and a derivative relationship for God's other 'children' into which Jesus introduces them (cf. 11:27) but in which he does not share with them on the same level."

[61] Cf. Bruner 2004, 297.

salvation and judgment throughout history.[62] To Matthew the acting God is the basis of the better righteousness he proposes (expanding the theocentricity pointed at in 4:10). Matthew has just argued on the basis of God's inherent holiness (cf. 5:48 God is "perfect"), demanding a certain pattern of behaviour from those who approach him. Matthew must here be thought to draw on the covenantal language which is expressed for instance in Lev 19:2 "You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy." This verse is also basic to later Jewish thoughts on *imitatio Dei*.[63] As in Mat 5:48 the picture of the character of God directs the ethics. In the LXX, "sanctify" (ἁγιάζω) is always used in a cultic setting.[64] As the centre of attention moves from the Temple to Jesus, this language also gets reworked (12:6 cf. especially the language of 'presence' in relation to Jesus. See the exegesis of 18:20). In following Jesus it is possible to "sanctify" God. I suggest that to Matthew this sanctification is partly achieved in the act of praying the Our Father.[65] The covenant reciprocity between divine and human acts found in the OT and Jewish tradition is carried over in this context.[66] Some have even gone so far as to see the prayer as a replacement of the *Shema*.[67]

The prayer for the kingdom ties the disciples to its king in a self-involving manner. It places them under his rule. In Matthew, the eschatological language is not primarily an expression of an intellectual belief about possible outcomes of the world, but is always a placing in relation to God. The prayer for the *arrival* of the kingdom and the will of God displays a complex temporality. This is to be expected as Matthew portrays the heavenly sphere coming to earth in the "kingdom." Prayer itself implies absence of something needed, and delay between the prayer-utterance and that which is perceived as its answer. Yet, Matthew presents it as a way of bringing the kingdom within reach. The kingdom of God is connected to the preaching of Jesus (3:2; 4:17; 5:3, 10, 19). In the ministry of Jesus it is near (3:2; 4:17; 6:10; 10:7; 12:28).[68] In the construction of an ideal pray-er

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[62] Cf. Gerhardsson 1984, 211; Mounce 1985, 56.

[63] Cf. Str-B 1:372; Str-B 2:159.

[64] Bonnard 1963, 83.

[65] "To hallow God's name is to live lives of prayer." Hauerwas 2006, 77.

[66] So Schweizer 1975, 146–159; Guelich 1982, 310–311; Hendrickx 1984, 108–124; Strecker 1988, 105–128; Luz 2002, 446–447. Cf. also Lev 22:31f. cf. also Albright and Mann 1971, 75.

[67] So Gerhardsson 1984, 214. Davies argues that the Lord's Prayer was shaped as a Christian counterpart to the *Amidah*. Davies 1964, 309. *Didache* 8:3 prescribes recitation 3 times a day.

[68] Unlike Luke the kingdom is never presented as belonging to Jesus, only to "the Son of Man" (13:41; 16:28).

the petition refers to the kingship of God manifested in the people who do his will, eventually to be extended to all. Therefore, Matthew seems to argue that prayer continues Jesus' ministry through bringing this kingdom near (28:18–20).

The two petitions of v. 10 set the kingdom and God's will in parallel.[69] In Matthew, the will of God (τὸ θήλημά σου) is most often used in the moral sense of doing the will of God (7:21; 12:50; 21:31), but also for God's plan for the creation (18:14; 26:42).[70] The parallelism implies that the kingdom of God comes when his will comes into effect. At the same time the act of prayer means that it is not fully realised at the time of praying. By engaging in the act of prayer, the pray-er does God's will and is thereby somehow within the sphere of God's kingdom. The prayer therefore ties the pray-er directly to the gospel narrative which displays God's will. The grammar of the utterance also points in this direction. The (circumlocutory) third person imperative instead of the second person opens for the involvement of the pray-er.[71] The pray-er is not a passive subject but one that participates in God's sphere of action. Such a thought is consistent with OT images of the divine will as a "claim on an active partner."[72] The petition is therefore part of a religious grammar that enables a life lived in continuity with the gospel narrative.[73] It is an acceptance of being defined from without, even to such a central aspect as 'the will.' That it is of central importance to Matthew is clear from the verbatim quote of this petition in the Gethsemane scene (26:42).

The first three 'Thou-petitions' of vv. 9–10 are parallel and similar in their theocentric character (the two-fold summary of the law is similar in this respect, see Mt 22:36–40; Mk 12:28–31; Lk 10:26–27).[74] The preceding paragraphs suggest that the three petitions can coherently and satisfactorily be understood as referring to an interaction between the acts of God and those of men appropriate to a covenant situation. God's will and power are manifest in Heaven, and need to be that on earth as well. In a response-inviting construction the audience is involved in its realisation

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69 Mounce 1985, 56.

70 To Brown it implies "God's plan for the universe." Brown 1965, 236.

71 So Gerhardsson 1984, 213; Hagner 1993, 148.

72 Luz 2002, 448; cf. Schmidt *TDNT* 3:583.

73 Likewise Luz 1989, 388–389.

74 Cf. Mt 6:33. To Gerhardsson the three first petitions are a *parallelismus membrorum* on God's final redemptive act. Gerhardsson 1984, 209–210. The first two of the Ten Commandments are theocentric, the rest more concerned with inter-human acts. Ex 20:1–17.

through prayer.[75] This prayer shares in God's 'cosmic' concerns and instills in the pray-er a sense of urgency and responsibility. The construction creates meaning and a personal history in relation to the traditional account of God and his acts. The pray-er is a part of that story. On this account belief is not a matter of propositions only, but an acceptance of a particular form of religious practice in relation to the reality of God. In this the anthropology is defined from without. Both the origin and goal of humanity are external to the praying self. The latter three petitions speak of God's direct involvement with the praying 'us.'[76] The former petitions dealt with God's will for the whole creation, the latter ones with deliverance from daily troubles, including daily nourishment.[77]

The fourth petition (v. 11) remains a puzzle due to the uncertainty surrounding the term *epiousion* (ἐπιούσιον).[78] The Gospel occurrences, in the Matthean and Lucan versions of the Our Father are the only known uses of the word.[79] Different linguistic possibilities have been given as to its meaning, but the interpretation remains bound to how the prayer and the theology of the Gospels are understood in a general sense.[80] Some see the prayers as wholly spiritual and eschatological, some as wholly earthly and realisable. Jeremias takes an intermediary position and argues that the petition "embraces everything that Jesus' disciples need for body and soul."[81] This also seems to be supported by 4:4, "man shall not live by bread alone." If all the petitions are seen as eschatological it should be remembered that the implications of asking for something eschatological to be given today is logically an inbreaking of eschatology now. The prayer explicitly states that the bread in question is to be given today (σήμερον). That is, if the petition is indeed thought of as being answered today. The possibility of an answer and the possibility of recognising it

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[75] The sharing of the pray-er in the process implies an eschatology in the process of realisation. Again contra Brown 1965.

[76] Gerhardsson 1984, 215.

[77] So Schweizer 1975, 154; Beare 1981, 175; Hultgren 1990, 52; Schnackenburg 2002, 68.

[78] For discussions of options old and new consult Lohmeyer 1965, 141–146; Carmignac 1969, 118–221; Marshall 1978, 459–460; Foerster *TDNT* 2:590–599.

[79] Metzger 1968, 64–66. No manuscript evidence is available apart from the Our Father. Cf. Didache 8.

[80] Various explanations of the Greek have been given. Cf. Hultgren 1990, 44–48. Black reads "today and tomorrow" in light of Aramaic, implying daily material needs. Black 1967, 203. Foerster reads "the bread which we need, give us today," i.e. a measure. Foerster *TDNT* 2:599. Likewise Gnilka 1986, 222.

[81] Jeremias 1967, 102. Jeremias understands the prayer in the sense of a "sich realisierende Eschatologie." Jeremias 1967, 107.

as such are what the interpretation of the last three petitions hinge on. Yet, this is not a question from within the text itself. Matthew seems to have no problem with divine causality within the created order. The conclusion to the whole section on prayer (7:7–11) maintains the sureness of answered prayers. God is a character who will see to the needs of those who are his people (he will give all "other things as well" 6:33). He is also an agent that can answer prayers in this physical world (cf. the healings and feeding miracles). From the viewpoint of the Gospel it is therefore not possible to see the physical as external to prayer. The opposite is also true, the prayer for physical bread is not seen as unspiritual. The scope of the prayer is therefore all-encompassing, a claim that fits in with the Matthean worldview.[82] The Our Father relates the ideal pray-er in a normative way to all of reality through setting God above it.[83]

In the petition for forgiveness (v. 12) the 'other' is included in the relation to God. As already seen in 5:43–48, the recipients of intercession and love are also those outside the community of disciples (the enemies).[84] Forgiveness can be seen as the trait that makes the disciples most like the Father. When they forgive they are doing the same act as the Father, and also the Son who dies for sinners (20:28). As in 5:44, prayer redefines the relation to the enemy. To Matthew there is a reciprocity between human and divine forgiveness (amplified by the immediately following parallel in 6:14–15; cf. also 18:21–35).[85] Again, ethical arguments are inseparable from the discourse about God. Acting in the right manner is above all a question of relating to God in the right manner.

The other side of the petition is the perceived reality of sin (cf. 6:12, 14–15; 9:2, 5, 6; 18:27, 32, 35). Humans are in need of forgiveness from God, and from each other. This displays the moral parameters that Matthew works within, and which to him are constitutive of personhood. Humans exist in a tension between doing God's will, and doing their own (or even Satan's 4:1–11; 16:23).[86] This is a repeated feature of the Matthean anthropology as seen in the calls to avoid temptation (4:1–11; 26:36–46). The coupling of prayer and temptation suggests that God is thought to

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[82] The prayer for bread can be thought to include that which comes together to produce bread; political stability, profitable physical conditions, etc.

[83] Finkel 1981, 152.

[84] Contra Stendahl who argues that the petition only concerns "intrafraternal" forgiveness. Stendahl 1984, 120.

[85] A similar dynamic is found in Sir 28:2.

[86] Cf. the Talmudic distinction between יצר הרע and יצר הטב pointing to man's potential for good. Str-B 4:466.

tip a perceived existential duality the right way in answer to specific petitions to that effect. It is clear that Jesus saves his followers from sin (1:21; cf. 20:28; 26:28). This further implies that receiving forgiveness from God is a function of being a follower of Jesus, and of praying as he taught to have sins forgiven. In this sense the words of the prayer can be seen as both erasing some borders towards 'the other' and at the same time maintaining (or even erecting) others.

Some observations add up to suggest that "temptation" stands for continued tests and trials (v. 13 πειρασμός). The word is anarthrous, which suggests that the final Temptation is not implied. Neither is the term used as a technical term in Jewish apocalyptic.[87] However, the idea of testing is common in Jewish tradition.[88] The parallel petition for deliverance from the evil one/evil also suggests that this is a question of temptation to depart from doing God's will.[89] In Matthew, this is consistent with the picture of the devil being opposed to God's will (4:10; 16:23) and of Jesus being led by the Spirit to his 'test' (4:1–11).[90] Jesus himself led his disciples into problems at sea (14:22). Through this petition the pray-er is kept in continuous dependence on God. Not praying would inevitably lead to temptation, and presumably sin and severance of the relationship to God. The act of prayer is that which can assure compliance with God's will and a continued relation. The existence of the ideal pray-er is one of dependence, and actually weakness.[91] Temptation and evil play a necessary role in this construal of the relationship between God and humans. Temptation is conceived of as a continued challenge, which is countered by a continued prayer for its avoidance.

As already noted the Our Father is part of the whole Matthean presentation of the new relationship to God possible on account of Jesus, one of sonship (made credible on account of Jesus' own sonship as described in 11:27, moreover Jesus saves from sin 1:21; cf. also 10:32; 26:28; He provides

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87 Luz 2002, 453.

88 Abraham in Gen 22:1; Sir 44:20; Jdt 8:26; 1 Macc 2:52, David in Ps 26:2, Hezekiah in 2 Chr 32:31; Dan 1:12, 14; Tob 12:14; the righteous in Wisd 2:17; 3:5; Sir 2:1; 4:17; 33:1.

89 The aorist infinitive should be understood as part of the negation plus aorist subjunctive construction of the first sentence of the parallel. "Temptation in the Lord's Prayer stands for those forces which would entice or drive God's servants into disloyalty to him." Manson 1956, 384.

90 The Temptation is similar to the prayer in referring to bread, kingdom, and temptation.

91 The Doxology is not found in any Greek manuscripts before the fifth century. Cf. 1 Chr 29:10–13. In contemporary Jewish praxis prayers always ended with a doxology. Jeremias 1957, 28; Jeremias 1967, 106. Private prayers were often concluded with fixed doxologies. Cf. Heinemann 1977, 172–177.

a ransom 20:28). In that sense the prayer and the whole of the Sermon of the Mount are inseparable from the character of Jesus. His life, death, and resurrection exemplify the dependence which the prayer expresses. For the implied audience the reading of the prayer includes attention to the whole. For them the teaching presupposes the life and death of Jesus.[92] As the highpoint of the ethical teaching of Jesus, the prayer designates a process of becoming which depends on God's answer to prayer. The dialogue with the Father and the share in his work transform the pray-er (a thought that is evident in such texts as Ez 20:41; 28:25; 36:22–38; Sir 36:4).[93] Prayer is a central response to Jesus' teaching, and a mark of the people of God (cf. Is 29:23, Jer 31:31–34; Cf. Mt 18:19–20; 21:12–22). To Matthew, the world and humans in it are not as they should be.[94] In prayer the soteriology is appropriated by the individual (praying "in secret" 6:6). The prayer-texts serve as a door into the textual world which the audience is invited to enter. The activity is in that sense a performance of the narrative which aids in the appropriation of the rest of it. Actually, the open-endedness of the petitions requires the involvement of the pray-er for the language to refer.[95]

After the commentary on the Our Father in 6:16–7:6 the passage in 7:7–11 continues to teach explicitly on prayer. These verses conclude the main section of the sermon (5:21–7:11). The analogy between God and human fathers appeals to the common human experience of fatherhood.[96] The 'how much more' construction covers up weaknesses in this metaphor, and takes the picture a step further. This also means that the relation to the heavenly Father is not immediately analogous to common human experiences (7:11). As seen in 11:25 it is only revealed in the relation between the Father and the Son. The saying again rehearses the OT picture of a God who is available to those who search for him (as in Mt 6:8–9; cf. Is 65:24; Jer 29:13; Prov 8:17).[97]

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92 This needs to be emphasised when the Jewish background of the prayer is considered.

93 So Carmignac 1969, 83–85; Gerhardsson 1984, 212.

94 To Ogletree biblical eschatology is a way to maintain thoughts different from the surrounding society. Ogletree 1983, 177–192.

95 The open-endedness facilitates acceptance in ever new circumstances. Luz 2002, 441.

96 "The vivid oddness of considering whether we fathers might respond to the needs of our children in a harmful or capricious way makes distrust of the heavenly Father appear unnatural." Tannehill 1975, 133.

97 The OT picture should take priority over the Gnostic understanding of "searching" sometimes adduced.

In verse 7, prayer is expressed with three present tense verbs (αἰτεῖτε, ζητεῖτε, κρούετε), which might signify persistency or endurance (cf. Lk 11 and 18). The use of present imperatives moves the audience with a rhetorical direct address. The three verbs suggest that answers to prayer are not only a matter of the Eschaton.[98] It also gives a picture of a situation in which there will be continuous needs and a continued dialogue. It is a form of 'unknowing' in the sense of willingly referring to and trusting in something which is only partly known. This use can be seen as an extension of the self into the area of traditional promise, an expression of 'faith.' As already noted, Matthew highlights active participation in the relation to the Father (in a covenantal manner). Prayer is central in this response. The timeless and borderless expressions of v. 11 echo that of the prayer in 6:9–13 and emphasises the surety of answer to such prayer ("How much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things?").[99]

9:38 Prayer in the Disciple Discourse

Verse 35 starts a transition between the miracles of chapters 8–9 and the discourse on the disciples in chapters 10 and 11. The verse in question is tied to the following in the use of "disciple" (μαθηταῖς) in 9:37 (cf. similar uses in 10:1, 24, 42; 11:1). To Matthew, the ministry of Jesus, part of which has been expounded in the preceding chapters, is thought to be continued through his followers.[100] It is the disciples who are called to pray and it is the disciples who are called to be workers and to continue the preaching and healings of Jesus (9:35//10:7–8 cf. 4:19 10:5–6, 18; 28:19).[101] In this the community is seen as a realisation of Israel's goal of being a light to the Gentiles (Is 42:6–7; 43:10–21; 44:8; 49:6).[102] In 13:39, 41 (cf. 24:31) the workers that gather the harvest are angels. Still, from the context it seems like

[98] Luz 2002, 500.

[99] On the response-inviting function of such generic expressions cf. Chatman 1978, 80, 82.

[100] The miracles should here be thought of as a direct paradigm for the audience. They were to perform and experience miracles in the same manner as Jesus and his disciples.

[101] As regards salvation historical progression, I follow the suggestions of Kingsbury that Matthew is divided into two eras, that of prophecy and that of fulfilment. Kingsbury 1975, 1–39; Kingsbury 1988, 41. Tri-partite schemes have been proposed by Strecker 1966, 57–74; Walker 1967; Meier 1975, 2–3, 215; Meier 1979.

[102] In the OT Israel is sometimes presented as a tool by which all people will be lead to worship God (Is 2:1–4; Mic 4:1–3; Zech 2:11; 8:20–23).

Jesus designates his followers as harvest workers. The thought of a cooperation of humans and angels is not uncommon in contemporary texts.[103]

The disciples do not only continue the ministry of Jesus, they share in the work of God like he does. The earlier tension between responding and being enabled to do so is evident in the image of God as a "shepherd" and as "Lord of the harvest." The former picture connotes mercy, the latter judgment.[104] This tension is found throughout the Gospel (cf. for instance 10:7–15). God, the "Lord of the harvest," pursues a specific end and calls for workers to help him.[105] To Matthew, the workers and prayer for workers share God's urgency in pursuing his plan. In this the pray-er is given a particular teleology.[106] The mission discussed in the verses that follow belongs to God, and the disciples share in it through prayer.[107] This thought of a sharing adds to the covenantal picture presented in the Our Father.

Inherent in the disciple discourse is the inevitable border-drawing of missionary activity. The pray-er is on the side of God and has a task to perform towards the 'other.' The non-pray-er does not share in the works of God. Furthermore, the 'other' who has not accepted Jesus and his teaching is not in the kingdom. This is evident from the associations of harvest with eschatological judgment. Prayer for the harvest therefore maintains a distinction between non-pray-ers and those prayed for. In this sense prayer is a religious activity which constructs a distinction between 'us' and 'them,' and maintains group cohesion.

11:25–27 Cry of Jubilation

In this passage a prayer-like utterance is used to reveal something about Jesus and his Father.[108] The introductory praise is an invitation to join the speaker in a confessional or psalmic fashion.[109] The text is similar

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[103] Especially in worship contexts. Hurtado 1999, 51.

[104] The two concepts are co-dependent.

[105] "The Lord of the Harvest" is God. Weaver 1990, 79. For the background of the harvest metaphor cf. Uro 1987, 201; Hagner 1993, 260.

[106] Hahn 1963, 32–33.

[107] In Matthew prayer is the foundation of the disciples' "missionary existence." Luz 2001, 65.

[108] The authenticity of vv. 25–27 is only supported by a minority, including Jeremias 1967, 47–52; Marchel 1971, 147–152.

[109] Stanley 1980, 162. It is also found in the basic Jewish prayer form *Berakah*.

to the Our Father in the use of "Father" (πάτηρ) and "heaven" (οὐρανός).[110] However, the passage is rather different from other prayer texts in the Synoptics. Both in content and function it resembles Johannine prayer-material.[111] Like Jn 17 it reveals something of the relationship between the Father and the Son, for the benefit and instruction of the hearers (cf. likewise 28:18–20). Still, in contrast to Jn 17, this passage does not request anything. Rather it is presented as a spontaneous praise by Jesus (ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ).

Both Jesus and his disciples receive characterisation in this scene. Although the wording of Jesus' prayer-teaching is shown to be continuous with his own praxis, the saying makes a strict division between Jesus and his followers. His praise is on account of them, not himself (in contrast to Jn 10:14). Jesus is associated directly with the Father, whom he knows, whereas the disciples have received revelation as a gift. This use of "revelation" implies that humans are somehow ignorant and need the enlightenment of God. The "simple ones" (νηπίος) are used as an ideal in this utterance; they display the right attitude before God. Already in 5:3 there is mention of the "poor in spirit." Here the term carries the connotations of both infancy and ignorance. This group finds a contrast in the "wise" and the "clever/those in the know" (σοφῶν καὶ συνετῶν). Just as something is revealed to one group something is being hid from the other. The disposition of the "wise" disqualifies them from receiving the revelation. The passage thus sets out the humble, and importantly child-like, attitude appropriate for responding to Jesus and his message.

Parallels to vv. 25–27 are often seen in the figure of Moses (Ex 33:12–14) and Jewish wisdom literature.[112] It is true that Jesus can here be thought to resemble Moses in being a revealer, an intercessor, and an example of humility. Matthew picks up this type in his presentation of Jesus, and at the same time extends some of those characteristics to Jesus' followers. Still, Jesus' relation to the Father is like none other's, and the "prayer" can only be uttered by him. The divine sonship has been revealed in 1:21–23;

[110] Mertens displays similarities to other Synoptic texts. Mertens 1957, 46–49. "Lord of Heaven and Earth" is a common Jewish prayer address. Jeremias 1971, 10, 187–188.

[111] The nature of this passage has been described: "wie ein Aerolith aus dem johanneischen Himmel gefallen." Hase 1876, 422. Cerfaux argues that although the concepts might be Johannine the language is not. Cerfaux 1958, 147–159.

[112] Davies and Allison 1991, 225, 231. Cf. Sir 51:23–27; 24:19–21. This passage was a favourite with the history-of-religions school which read 27b in light of Hellenistic mysticism and the Hermetic literature. Norden 1956, 280. Despite some interesting parallels the argument remains unconvincing.

2:15; and 3:17, and is further developed in 16:15 and 17:5. In the narrative, Jesus' sonship is not only understood in the light of titles or background, but as a rhetorical opposite to the Father.[113] The passage can be read as an unqualified use of Jesus as God's Son (cf. Mk 13:32//Mt 24:36; 1 Cor 15:28; Jn throughout), especially in the reciprocity of the 'like knows like' formula in v. 27b. Although this is not explicit it is not an unwarranted reading.[114] In v. 27 Jesus' role as a revealer is equalled to that of the Father. The good will of God (εὐδοκία) to reveal (ἀπεκάλυψας) is paralleled in the will (βούληται) of Jesus to reveal (ἀποκαλύψαι). He knows the Father and can reveal him to others. In this very utterance something along these lines is done insofar as the prayer-utterance lays open the relation between the Father and the Son. In this sense the utterance is used more to further the Christology than to develop an explicit ideal piety to be followed. Indirectly it supports the authority with which the prayer-teaching is given, in that sense the scene has a legitimating function. Jesus is a credible teacher on the relation to God because he knows him.

14:19 and 15:36 Feeding Miracles

These scenes fall within a section of increasing conflict (12:1–16:20). Jesus continues his ministry to Israel, and is opposed by Pharisees and Scribes. The miraculous feeding recounted in Mt 14 includes a short reference to prayer which shows Jesus acting according to common Jewish custom.[115] Jesus spoke a blessing over the loaves (εὐλόγησεν καὶ κλάσας) as any head of the household would have done. The language is reminiscent of the last supper (cf. Lk 24:30). In 14:19 a non-verbal prayer praxis is described; not much can be made of it within the narrative ("he looked to heaven"). In an aside it can be noted that Jesus is again characterised with OT types, making him acceptable to an ideal audience well versed in Jewish tradition (Elisha 2 Kgs 4:1–7, 33, 42–44, cf. also Is 11:5–6; 53:4).[116]

Whereas the first feeding scene only alludes to the last supper, the second one (15:36) is more explicit in its direct use of the word "he gave thanks" (εὐχαριστήσας). This is the word Matthew uses in his version of

[113] Luz 2001, 165.

[114] In traditional exegesis Jesus is the (unqualified and ontological) Son of God. Luz 2001, 169.

[115] Bonnard has given a good overview of different interpretations of this miracle. Bonnard 1970, 217–219. Despite being "preposterous" for some modern interpreters (Beare 1981, 326–327) the scene has a distinct function in the construction of the implied reader.

[116] Cf. also the manna stories in Ex 16 and Num 11.

the Last Supper (Mt 26:27). Similar wording is used in Mark, Luke and Paul (Mk 14:23, Lk 22:17, 1 Cor 11:24). The effect of the parallel is to emphasise that Jesus meets the needs of his people. That the language of the Last Supper is found at other places points to the power of this ritual in creating a particular mindset. The parallel wording suggests that the later scene is to be understood in light of the miracles. The use implies that in Matthew these mighty acts are thought to signify the presence of the kingdom; and that the Last Supper also does this.[117]

14:23–33 Prayer on a Mountain

Verse 23 acts as an interpretation of the two miracles it is placed in between. In OT fashion Jesus climbs a mountain to be with God (so also 17:1–8; 28:16).[118] The reference to prayer is not a major part of the scene but contributes to the picture of Jesus as a consistent pray-er. In the two feeding miracles he prays, and in this scene in between them he prays as well. The result is to present Jesus as a character of great piety. It can also be noted that he searches solitude in prayer, he does not pray with the disciples (cf. 6:5–6). In Matthew, as in Mark, the miracle stories highlight that Jesus is a powerful and religious character.[119] In Matthew the references to prayer in this scene should be read as pointers to God as the source of Jesus' power. In his ministry he signifies the presence of the kingdom.[120]

In addition to being interpretative with regards to the miracles there is also a possibility that the prayer should be seen as effecting the ensuing confession, seeing Jesus as a unique Intercessor. This is arguably the meaning of Lk 9:18–27, where Peter confesses in a scene directly following Jesus' prayer. Matthew has already emphasised that any knowledge of God and his work is only available as a gift of revelation (11:25–27). Furthermore, that this gift of revelation is given directly by Jesus (11:25–30). In Matthew, the scene following the prayer includes some instances where Jesus' identity can be thought to be revealed. In the OT walking on water is only performed by God.[121] Jesus' self-reference in v. 27 seems to be an allusion to Ex 3:6, 14. The confession reached by the disciples

[117] The form "made it possible for the Christian hearer to understand his own experiences in the Eucharist in the light of the miracle reported in the story." Luz 2005, 126.

[118] In Matthew a mountain can also be the place of a satanic attack. Cf. 4:8.

[119] Ashton 2000, 62.

[120] Cf. Luz 2005, 118, 133.

[121] Job 9:8; see also Ps 77:19; Hab 3:15. For passing by cf. Ex 33:22; 34:6.

in v. 33 ("Truly you are the son of God") is the high-point of the scene.[122] This brings to mind the earlier call by Jesus to "confess/acknowledge" (ὁμολογέω) him, certainly an act of devotion (10:32). Here is one of the instances in Matthew where humans fall down before Jesus. In this scene it should be read as "worship," or at least as a prefiguration of the worship in 28:20. In this way, Matthew is progressing with more and more explicit declarations concerning the nature of Jesus. His authority as true teacher of piety is gradually increased, finally to include him as a recipient of that very piety (28:16–20).

18:19–20 Correction and Prayer

The passage in 18:15–20 is part of an ecclesiological discourse (18:1–35) that speaks to the community about discipleship and discipline. As an account of conflict management, the passage reveals much about the way the community draws borders and creates norms.[123] Interestingly this passage includes a section on prayer. Moreover, the presuppositions that come to expression are also important for the understanding of the other prayer-passages.

It is not obvious how the passage on prayer (vv. 19–20) is thought to connect with what precedes it. Verses 15–17 contain a rule of the community. Verse 18 connects to the preceding verses thematically and in the use of "amen" and the loosing and binding which seems to pertain directly to the disciplining of the "sinner." Verse 19 on the other hand is not a direct logical continuation of the preceding verses. That a connection is still implied is evident in the use of "if" (ἐάν) which is continued from vv. 15–17, and also the repetition of "on earth" (ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς) and "in heaven" (ἐν οὐρανοῖς) from v. 18. However, the use of "again I say to you" (cf. πάλιν v. 19a) leaves open what kind of logical connection is envisaged. Is it a presupposition of what has been said, or its result? It can also be more detached from what precedes it. On that account it points back to earlier prayer-teaching.[124] This is most probable, "all things" (παντὸς πράγματος) in vv. 19–20 does suggest an open-endedness.

Within the narrative the scene broadens the promise of authority given to Peter in 16:9, by including a larger undefined body of leaders in its

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[122] So Hurtado 1983, 91.

[123] The kind of exclusion envisaged in v. 17 seems to presuppose a smaller community; it is not the people of Israel.

[124] Schnackenburg sees a break after v. 17. Schnackenburg 2002, 177.

exercise.[125] Like in the Our Father and the prayer-utterance of 11:25–27, the pair "Heaven and earth" is used. To Matthew, the community of Jesus' followers exists in both spheres simultaneously, especially in the activity of prayer. The connection to the OT passage on the law concerning witnesses is of particular interest to the understanding of this passage. Deuteronomy 19:15 establishes the need for two or three witnesses (cf. Mt 18:16, 19), and 19:17 goes on to say that the disputant "shall appear before the LORD, before the priests and the judges." This passage makes a direct connection between God and the priest and judges. Matthew makes the same connection with regard to his own community but places the emphasis on the act of prayer. The community has authority only as a function of prayer. The 'correctors' are presented as working with, or on behalf of, the Father. In that sense the teaching continues the emphasis on shared work in 6:9–11 and 9:38. In fact, in prayer for correction the community is thought to represent the heavenly reality on earth. The conclusion to the question in the last paragraph must be that verses 19–20 connect to what precedes it thematically since the community, including its ethics, has its basis in the relation to the Father. Correction has its basis in the community's relation to God, a covenant argument.[126] As in the Sermon on the Mount the ethics are inherent in the relation to God, and in the religious praxis.[127]

The emphasis on the communal aspect should be read as a general trait of Matthean prayer (6:9). The general saying in vv. 19 and 20 postulates a minimum of two who pray together (the context is that of the congregation cf. ἐκκλησίᾳ v. 17). A similar emphasis on the group is found in v. 20 which uses "gathered" (συνηγμένοι) and "in the midst of" (ἐν μέσῳ). In its context the saying of v. 19 functions as a comment upon the correction which is performed by the community. At the same time it is a general statement that is drawn into the argument as a warrant (cf. γάρ). Because the stated saying is true it must apply even to this case. Jesus' presence is with his followers as a group. Effective prayer is seen as an activity of the community. It is also in this context that the reference to "whatever you pray" (περὶ παντὸς πράγματος οὗ ἐὰν αἰτήσωνται) should be understood. The community functions as keepers of the teaching of Jesus (28:20). It is whatever prayed in agreement with the teaching of Jesus which must be

[125] On this account it is not decisive whether the plural or singular of the authority saying (v. 18) is the earlier.

[126] A typical Jewish argument. Flusser 1988, 515–525.

[127] Matthew does not present a general ethics.

implied (cf. the parallel in 21:22). This teaching is wholly theocentric with the *Shema* as its base (as seen in 6:9–11 in light of 4:10).

That Jesus is present with those who pray is a strong Christological claim.[128] It seems to presuppose a generic presence of Jesus, meaning a post-Easter setting. It connects to the general *Christus Praesens* theme running through Matthew (cf. 1:23, 28:20). Jesus founded the community (16:18) and remains with it. The gathering in his name probably points to the "calling on the name of Jesus" which the early community engaged in (Acts 22:16; 1 Cor 1:2; Cf. 1 Chr 16:8; Ps 4:2; 50:15; Amos 4:12; Zeph 3:9). However, there is no use of an explicit prayer to Jesus or in his name as is the case in Jn 13–16. As regards the reference to 'presence' it can be observed that the 'glory,' as the 'body' of God, is important in some strands of Jewish and Christian tradition.[129] At times it is portrayed as being present in the Temple (1 Chr 7:1, 3; Ez 43:4–5; 44:4). Moreover, God is thought to dwell among his people (Ez 43:7; Joel 2:27; Zech 2:10–11). In such a context the claim that it will be Jesus who is present in the midst of his followers could be read as an implicit claim of divinity.[130] He is potentially present at all places where people pray. Matthew portrays Jesus as greater than the Temple (12:6). In that sense the passage can plausibly be read as a Christological reorientation of the community of Deut 19:17 with its priests and judges, and that of the Temple also.

In the act of prayer the spheres of heaven and earth are bridged. The community represents the reality of heaven on earth. The correction is executed by the community which is thereby set over the individual. The exclusion of the individual must be accompanied by prayer as the community has its source in heaven. This might seem to suggest a direct line of authority from God to leader to individual. However, it is not obvious that the passage is concerned with a particular leadership. Rather, the passage indicates that the reconstitution of the individual sinner is in the end a matter for the whole congregation. In that sense it continues the covenant understanding of the people of God. In 18:12–14 and 18:21–35 it is the graceful Father who is portrayed. The erring person must "be found" and "forgiven," part of which is accomplished through prayer. In

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128 To Luz v. 20 is "the Christological centre of the whole chapter." Luz 2001, 458.

129 DeConick sees this in what she calls mystical literature. DeConick 2006, 11. The use of "in my name" could be understood as a circumvent way of referring to God (cf. "for the sake of the name" m. 'Abot 4:11).

130 Cf. the rabbinical notion that where two are gathered to study the Torah, there is the presence of God (m. 'Abot 3:2). Cf. Str-B 1:794–795. Cf. also Joel 2:27; Zech 2:10–11.

contrast those outside the community are negatively portrayed through the construction of strong borders. The persistent sinner stands in danger of being expelled, becoming as a gentile (v. 17). In this sense prayer legitimates the community defining efforts of the followers of Jesus; they have their origin in God himself.

19:13–15 Prayer for the Children

Among the Synoptics only Matthew uses the explicit verb "pray" (προσεύχομαι) in this scene (Mk 10:13–16; Lk 18:15–17).[131] The passage is special also in the sense that it is one of two places in the Synoptic Gospels where Jesus prays *for* people (Lk 22:32). In this scene the disciples serve as a foil for Jesus' teaching. The way Jesus acts against the intentions of the disciples maintains his uniqueness, and also displays their miscomprehension. This ironic trait directs the audience to right what the disciples do wrong. Contrast to the disciples is provided by the children who are received by Jesus. Both the children and the act of receiving them can be seen as ideals, the latter being relevant for prayer as such.[132] Jesus received the children who seem to have been deemed unimportant by the disciples. The prayer to the 'Father' sets the pray-ers on the same level as them; they are also children (the context is teaching on the family, 19:1–30).

The act of laying on of hands is a marker of the Matthean worldview. In the Gospels the laying on of hands is normally associated with healings. In similarity to those scenes the physical act itself here transfers the answer of Jesus' prayer, a blessing, to the children.[133] There is no mention of words being spoken and the laying on of hands seems to be the important element. Some 'spiritual' quality is transferred in the act. Just like it is possible to become "polluted" or impure it is possible to become "blessed" (cf. "unclean spirits" in 10:1; 12:43; "uncleanliness" in 23:27).[134] Laying on of hands is an activity engaged in repeatedly by the early Christians (Acts 8:18; 1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6; Heb 6:2).[135] Humans engage in and are influenced by an unseen reality. In Matthew, prayer is an act performed at the interchange of these spheres.

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131 Cf. *Semeia* 29 for Mk 10:13–16. Cf. also Derret 1983.
132 For the ideal of the 'child' cf. 18:2–6, 10. Cf. Légasse 1969, 38, 322–326.
133 So Nolland 2005, 784.
134 Cf. Douglas 1966; Martin 1995.
135 It was also performed by Jewish scribes in Jerusalem. Jeremias 1960, 49.

21:12–22 Temple Cleansing and Fig Tree

The entry into Jerusalem with its messianic overtones (21:1–11), together with the material that follows it, is particularly important in the Gospel of Matthew which is concerned with Jesus' relation to Judaism. The passage in vv. 12–22 contains two scenes in which prayer is mentioned. The Temple cleansing on the first day refers to the Temple as a house of prayer, the second day begins with the fig tree scene which is followed by explicit prayer-teaching. As the narrative moves towards its climax in Jerusalem the confrontations with Jesus' opponents become fiercer (cf. 21:18–22:14 and ch. 23). In both the passages under consideration Jesus is portrayed as critiquing the Temple in OT prophetic fashion (v. 13 uses Is 56:7 and Jer 7:11, cf. also Mal 1:10 and Hos 9:15). Jesus enters Jerusalem with the authority of the Messiah and "Son of David" (cf. v. 5 and 9). He is distinguished from the highest religious authorities of Jerusalem as a very different kind of leader and religious teacher (cf. the questioning in v. 23f. cf. 24:64). This argument is also supported through the use of the ideal Matthean terms "child" and "infant" (especially νήπιος v. 16, but also παῖς v. 15 and θηλαζόντος v. 16) which also turn up in prayer-contexts (7:9–11; 11:25 and in the address "Father"). It is the children, not the religious elite, who express the right kind of devotion (αἶνος "praise" v. 16). They direct it at Jesus in the cry "Hosanna, son of David" (Ὡσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ). The utterance is ambiguous as it can be read as both an address to God, and as an address to Jesus who would then be implored to save.[136] Such double entendre is consistently used throughout Matthew (see the section on Prayer to Jesus?, cf. 8:8, 25; 14:30; 15:22, 25; 17:15; 20:30–33), only to be finally explained in the worship of Jesus after his resurrection (28:17).

A main argument of the section is the claim that the Temple finds its true realisation in the prayers of the community of Jesus' followers. The purpose of the Temple cleansing is not altogether clear (verses 12–17). A number of different proposals could be furthered: a restoration of the true Temple-cult, a symbolical destruction of the present Temple, or a critique of the business aspect of the Temple. The act of turning over the tables is certainly a protest against a commercial aspect of the Temple system. So is also the designation "cave of robbers" (σπήλαιον λῃστῶν). This is in

[136] Légasse 1969, 339. To Legasse the children are used to highlight the main points of Matthew. Cf. 11:25–26.

general agreement with other teachings in Matthew (11:5; 19:21).[137] However, the main point seems to lie at another level. Jesus claims that the true intention of the Temple is not met at present. The Temple should be "a house of prayer" (Is 56:7a).[138] The Temple is later used in the construction of Jesus' character, in the implicit claim that he is the Temple (24:26; 26:61; 27:40). The imagery gets mixed up as Jesus is also present in the prayers of the disciples (18:19–20) as God was thought to be in the Temple. The result is that in Jesus the true 'function' of the Temple is continued.[139] More specifically, this function of the Temple is continued in those who follow him when they pray in his presence.

This reading of the Temple cleansing and the designation of a "house of prayer" finds support in the fig tree scene. The passage is preceded and followed by Temple scenes and should be read as interpretative in respect to those passages. The language is reminiscent of OT passages where judgment is spoken on the people of Israel for not producing good fruits (Jer 8:13; 24:1–8; Hos 9:10–11; Micah 7:1–6). The use of "fruit" (καρπός) instead of "figs" (συκῆ) connects to Matthew's ethical teaching which uses the same image. To be fruitful is to follow the will of God (7:16–20; 12:33; cf. also 13:8, 26). To Matthew "unfruitfulness" is a sure recipe for judgment. The prophetic actions of Jesus are therefore continued and expanded in this scene following the Temple-cleansing. This prophetic element is even clearer when read in conjunction with the temptation and the feeding miracles which show that the scene is not about Jesus' frustration at not being able to eat. Further support for this is found in the exclusion of any direct natural explanation of why Jesus cursed the tree (in difference from Mk).[140] All in all, the scene is used to further establish the validity of the piety taught by Jesus in contrast to the Temple establishment.[141]

The cursing and withering of the fig tree moves on to direct speech to the disciples in which Jesus answers their amazement. The construction makes the act of Jesus an example for his followers who are to follow him (cf. Jn 14:12 "he will do greater things…"). If they have faith they will do similar things even to a mountain (v. 21). This should be read as a generic

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[137] For a discussion of contemporary texts accusing the Temple of corruption cf. Evans 1989, 522–539.

[138] Interestingly Matthew also omits Is 56:7b "for all the gentiles" against his later universal scope (28:18–20).

[139] Sociological explanations could be sought in a community distanced, voluntarily or involuntarily, from the Temple.

[140] Hagner 1995, 604.

[141] Cf. 22:1–14. On this cf. further Menninger 1994, 151–153.

hyperbole which refers to the efficacy of believing prayer.[142] The multiple use of the saying also supports this understanding (17:20). It is an ambiguous saying which requires the input of the audience; an input that needs to be more self-involving than propositional.

The whole fig tree episode is concluded in the saying "Whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith" (v. 22). To Matthew faith is an absolute requirement for receiving answers to prayer (21–22). The sayings therefore qualify the very positive prayer-teaching found in 7:7–11 and 18:19 (where the caveat was agreement among pray-ers). The asking must be accompanied by belief to be efficacious. At the same time this construction also serves as a caveat for unanswered prayers, they do not display the appropriate belief. In v. 21, faith is described as a possession (ἐὰν ἔχητε πίστιν). In v. 22 it is the act of asking which is qualified by the participle of "believe" (πιστεύοντες). Mark uses "faith in God" in the parallel passage. This might be implied here, but it might again reflect Matthew's use of ambiguity in the references to Jesus. In Matthew 'belief' is normally belief in Jesus (9:28; 18:6; 27:42), which his opponents do not have. Jesus has enabled faith and therefore prayer. In their prayers the community of his followers are presented as a form of ideal Temple, as it should be—'a house of prayer.'

24:20 The Eschatological Discourse

The eschatological discourse (24:1 to 25:46) presents insider teaching (24:3 κατ' ἰδίαν) on a time of unique distress. This time of distress terminates in the coming of the Son of Man, the apocalyptic event above all others. In the middle of the discourse there is a short passing reference to prayer. At the appearance of the "abomination of desolation" the people of Judea must flee (v. 15). Prayer is to be made that it should not occur in winter or on a Sabbath. There is no option of praying for it not to happen, it is ordained by God (it must happen, δεῖ v. 6). In Judea winter would make a flight more troublesome.[143] The reference to the Sabbath is harder to interpret. At the time of Jesus it appears that most Jews would have had no problems fleeing, or even fighting on the Sabbath.[144] The prayer can

[142] Reading a geographical location into the demonstrative "this" (τούτῳ) is an over-interpretation.

[143] Cf. Josephus *B.J.* 4:7. In spring AD 68 Gadarenes could not flee across the Jordan to Jericho due to rainstorms.

[144] Nolland 2005, 971. Some have argued for Sabbath observance on the basis of this verse, an inconclusive case. Mt 5:17–19 and 23:23 suggests that the Matthean community

be read as a form of wish or literary embellishment ("o that it would not be . . ."), or as a direct influence of the timing of the events. The first option is most probable as the prayer does not seem to constitute a major part of the argument; it is just mentioned in passing. The main thrust in the section is God's control, and his care for his "elect" (τοὺς ἐκλεκτούς vv. 22 and 24).

Prayer to Jesus?

In a number of passages throughout Matthew, Jesus is implored to save or heal (8:8, 25; 14:30; 15:22, 25; 17:15; 20:30–33). In many of these passages Jesus is addressed with the title "Lord" (κύριος), followed by a petition.[145] He is asked to save (8:25; 14:30 σῶσον), to have mercy (9:27; 15:22 ἐλέησον), to help (15:25 βοήθει) and to heal (8:8 ἰάομαι). "Lord" is used in a number of different ways. It connotes respect and is used of God (11:25), of Jesus, in many parables, and of Pilate (27:63). The point to emphasise is that the addresses use psalmic prayer-language. In 8:25 and 14:30 the petitioners use the combination "Lord save" (κύριε σῶσον). This address is very common in the Psalms (3:8; 6:4; 7:2; 11:2; 19:10 etc). This does not amount to a Christological argument like it does in Acts where the risen Lord is addressed (Acts 7:59–60; and possibly 1:24). However, it does remind the audience of their psalmic prayers to God. The use is probably an indirect hint to the 'Jewish-Christian' implied audience's own prayers to Jesus.[146] Prayers to Jesus are not explicit in any of the Gospels, but are attested in other early parts of the tradition (see for instance Acts 7:59, 1 Cor 16:22).[147] The stylized and traditional form of the addresses might suggest a liturgical setting. However, there are also similar petitions without the title (8:14; 9:18–26). In Matthew the addresses can in some instances also be understood to refer to God, who is to save the petitioner (see though "Lord, son of David" in 15:22; 20:30–31). The overall result is an ambiguity as to the nature of Jesus which fits in with Matthew's characterisation of Jesus. The passages are not explicit prayers to Jesus, but the competent audience can

kept the Sabbath (Mt 12:1). On the other hand Jesus is portrayed as having a radical view of the Sabbath. Cf. Stanton 1992, 193–198.

145 In 9:18–26 the title is not used, but there the petitioner falls down/worships (προσκυνέω) Jesus.

146 So Luz 2002, 460.

147 Cf. Hurtado 1998, 104; Hurtado 2003, 217–347.

understand a deeper level of communication in the scenes. To them the characters become examples of trust in and devotion to Jesus. This also seems to agree with Matthew's emphasis on continuity. Jesus is present to the later believers doing the same things as he did earlier.

Narrative Progression: Ministry Narrative

The first section of Matthew explains who Jesus is. Part of that explanation sets out Jesus' relation to Judaism. In Matthew the relationship is complex and not clear-cut, but it appears as if Jesus does not find appropriate faith in Israel (8:10). He is sent to them but they do not receive him (10:6; 15:24; 27:42). As a part of this discussion Matthew includes Jesus' teaching on prayer. It gives his followers a distinct place within the Judaism of his day. More than that, the disciples' relation to God is seen as a true continuation of the people's relation to God as recounted in the OT. The Jewish-Christian community at prayer is a true Temple.

Matthew connects this new relationship to God directly to Jesus who is present with his followers, especially when they pray. The main material on prayer is found in teaching discourses. The ideal is also mainly constructed through the explicit teaching material, more than the narrative progression. Jesus is presented as a unique figure with a unique relation to God (11:25). This gives him authority to teach on the disciples' relation to God. That relation is presented as a function of Jesus' ministry and saving acts. In that sense the teaching found in Matthew is not only a generic ethical teaching but is inseparable from the character of Jesus. Implicitly, the teaching is part of what Jesus reveals and therefore part of the salvation he enables. The message is integrated with the intimations of Jesus' continued presence with his disciples found throughout the narrative (especially 18:20–22). The disciples on their part do not fully understand Jesus at this point. They can "worship" him at one point (14:33), but still be rebuked as "Satan" for lack of understanding of his mission (16:23). Still, although they do not understand him fully, they are with him and follow him.

Passion Narrative 26:1–28:20

If the first part of the narrative explained who Jesus is, this second part explains why he must suffer. Although all the Gospels give the passion a central role in their narratives, the accounts take different nuances in the

different Gospels.[148] This is at once obvious from the general outlines of the narratives. In Mark there is tension between the early miracles and the climax of the story at the cross. Also the narrative comes to a close at the empty tomb. As already noted Matthew is less sequential and the whole is often present at different stages of the narrative. He begins with an infancy narrative and ends in Galilee with the risen Lord, giving a picture of Jesus that is always present to his disciples and the audience. Further, in Matthew Jesus seems to be more in control of his predicament (26:2, 18, 25, 53). Prayer is important also in this section of the narrative, especially in Gethsemane which qualifies the earlier teaching.

26:26–27 The Last Supper

In the scene of the Last Supper the thanks that Jesus gave for the bread (εὐλογήσας) and cup (εὐχαριστήσας) can be seen as prayers. In light of the prayers at the feeding miracles, which use the same words, the language itself appears to be liturgical. In a similar way, the language in those scenes reminds of a Jewish meal. However, the singular focus on the person of Jesus sets the present meal apart from its Jewish surrounding. The scene is seen as a generative rite in the early community (1 Cor 11:23–26), and as a prayer in itself. That is however an aspect beyond the use of the text in Matthew.

26:36–46 Jesus in Gethsemane

The Gethsemane scene is central in the passion story. It serves to comment upon the task that lies before Jesus. After this the rest of the narrative moves forward as on a set track with Jesus being a passive character ("*they* arrest him" v. 50 etc). In the narrative it finally establishes the scandalous Christological necessity of a crucified Messiah (1 Cor 1:23). Parallels to the language are found in Matthew's Our Father.[149] The use in Matthew of "my Father" (πάτερ μου) instead of Mark's "Abba Father" (αββα ὁ πατήρ Mk 14.36) could be seen as an example of this. The call not to come into temptation (μὴ εἰσέλθητε εἰς πειρασμόν v. 41) is parallel to the sixth petition. The reference to the will in v. 42 is also a direct parallel to the similar prayer in the Our Father (γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου). The effect is to estab-

[148] Cf. Matera 1986.

[149] The Gethsemane scene has like the Our Father been seen as a kind of summary of the Matthean prayer-teaching. Stanley 1980, 161–166, 171.

lish the Our Father as *the* ideal prayer through the added support of the praxis of Jesus. The three times Jesus goes away to pray recalls the actions of sustained prayer in 7:7–11. The number seems to be a picture of intense prayer and is used by Paul (2 Cor 12:8).

Parallels to the *aqedah* has been suggested for this scene (Gen 22:1–14). This has been argued on the somewhat slender basis of the un-Matthean use of the Greek personal pronoun as a demonstrative (αὐτοῦ v. 36), a use central in the OT passage.[150] The fit is not complete as it would seem to give Jesus the role of Abraham, not that of Isaac. Then again that might be a possibility insofar as Jesus seems to be in total control of his destiny and the giving of his life. 20:28 shows that Matthew understands the passion against a background of redemption ("to give his life as a ransom (λύτρον) for many"). The result would be that Jesus is understood as both sacrifice, and as the one giving it. This is more a Christological argument than a direct example for his followers. Still, the passage can be thought to exemplify an ideal sacrificial obedience which the disciples have been called to display, one which is based on Jesus' prior act.

Jesus' prayers bring to mind OT prayers that ask God to change his mind. In covenantal fashion this is done by reminding him of his promises (So Ex 32:10–14; 2 Kgs 20:1–6; Jer 18:5–11). In a number of these texts God is moved to act for the pray-er.[151] Similar thoughts are found in the theology of the OT Psalms of Lament. The Gethsemane scene connects directly to these in the use of "to be grieved" (περίλυπός) on the lips of Jesus in v. 38. The same expression is found in Ps 41:6, 12; 42:5 (LXX). Matthew continues the possibility of a 'man against God' form of prayer within the theocentric covenantal frames.[152] Even if Jesus is a more static character in Matthew than in the other Synoptics the picture of prayer is still dialogical. To Matthew, Jesus 'knows' the outcome of his life and death and still engages in dialogue over it.[153]

Jesus' petitions can be seen as a progression in which he comes into line with 'God's will.' The first petition asks God to remove "the cup" (v. 39 εἰ δυνατόν ἐστιν παρελθάτω ἀπ' ἐμοῦ τὸ ποτήριον τοῦτο), the second displays

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[150] Stanley 1980, 174.

[151] Cf. Miller 1994, 31, 68–85, 114–126. Blank has shown this 'Promethean' character to be prominent in the OT ideal pray-er. Blank 1977, 91–101.

[152] In contrast Greco-Roman piety saw "sorrow" (λύπη) as a "weak emotion" (πάθος) (cf. Col 3:5). Celsus cannot understand how Jesus can be God and still 'complain' in the garden. Cf. Origen's *Cels.* 2:23f. Cf. further Luz 2002, 133.

[153] In contrast to the Greek thought of fate or magic, or the philosophical argument that it is best to leave the decision to the deities rather than to pray. Cf. Burkert 1985, 75.

a stronger realisation that "the cup" is indeed what God wills (v. 42 εἰ οὐ δύναται τοῦτο παρελθεῖν ἐὰν μὴ αὐτὸ πίω…). In the Matthean context "the cup" should be read as a reference to the death of Jesus (20:22 and 26:26–35). There is a progression from the question in v. 39 ("if it is possible") to an explicit utterance of submission in v. 42 ("thy will be done").[154] This submission comes as a repetition of the third petition of the Our Father, which is thereby established as *the* major prayer of the Matthean ideal pray-er. This is further emphasised with the placement of v. 42 at the high-point of a chiasm of verses 36–46.[155] In this, Jesus exemplifies the ideal pray-er in his life and death. That the last petition is only referred to as praying the same thing, further suggests that the second petition is the one in which the ideal is met.

In the Gethsemane scene Jesus is seconded by the disciples. From among them he brings Peter and the Sons of Zebedee like he did in 17:1f. Jesus' interaction with the disciples leaves them in a more positive light than in Mark. This continues the Matthean emphasis on the connection between the disciples of Jesus and his later followers. Matthew stresses their presence *with* Jesus. Jesus proceeds towards Gethsemane "with his disciples" (v. 36), he brings his three friends "with him" (v. 37), he calls them to stay awake "with me" (vv. 38 and 40).[156] However, in the end the disciples are portrayed as sleeping despite the call for wakefulness (vv. 38, 41). Jesus does not even unsettle them but returns to his Father alone (vv. 43–44). The scene could be seen as a point at which the disciples exit the main line of development; at this stage of the narrative they cannot follow Jesus but become passive onlookers. At the same time it is a form of implicit communication in which the audience who knows the outcome of the narrative observe Jesus (the protagonist). They are here made to associate with him and as his only companions.

Besides the Christological aspects, the scene can also be read as a type for the audience. That this is warranted is shown in the calls to follow Jesus through "taking up the cross" (10:38; 16:24; cf. also 27:32). It is also the effect of including explicit teaching in direct continuation with Jesus' own prayers. Jesus is shown teaching that the way to avoiding "temptation" is the act of "watching" (γρηγορέω) and "praying" (v. 41). In the Matthean context the "temptation" seems to be daily sins and falling away from

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[154] Most early ecclesial interpreters emphasised the presence of two wills in this scene. Luz 2002, 139f.

[155] The chiasm indicates the traditional and mnemonic nature of this prayer-text.

[156] Cf. also the use of μετά 26:18, 20, 23, 29, 51. Galizzi 1972, 128.

faith (cf. 6:13; 24:42; 25:13; cf. also 1 Cor 16:13; Col 4:2). Jesus succeeded in overcoming temptation at the beginning of his ministry (4:1–11), and his followers must do so continuously. The threefold departure of Jesus in Gethsemane, and the failure of the disciples to stay awake, mean that in the end the audience is left alone with Jesus and his Father. They follow him to the heart of his piety.[157] This they can do since they accept the final outcome of the narrative, already known to them. Their piety is inseparable from their connection to him. They can now avoid the temptation of idolatry, through prayer. Like Jesus they should fall down before God (ἔπεσεν 26:39), not before the devil (πεσών 4:9). In this the typological role of Jesus in the temptation scene is repeated and emphasised. Watchful prayer is avoidance of idolatry. The call to "watch" is used repeatedly in the close context (24:42, 43; 25:13). In light of Jesus' unknown "coming" it is necessary to "watch" (24:42). These uses of the term suggest that also the saying in the Gethsemane scene should be understood in light of the Matthean eschatology. In the present situation of the disciples, and audience, it is necessary to watch and pray to avoid the temptation of leaving faith (26:41; cf. 1 Thess 5:6; Acts 3:2–3; 16:15).

The call to be watchful and to pray is connected to an explicit anthropological statement; the "spirit" (πνεῦμα) is willing but the "flesh" (σάρξ) is weak (26:41). At first sight this seems to be a strict dualism, but this reading is too categorical. The thought is more like that of the Sermon on the Mount, which seems to argue that the ethical choice set forth in the teaching of Jesus corresponds to two faculties within humans.[158] That the followers themselves also are in for judgement is clear from 22:14; 24:45–51. Then again, in 24:22 "the elect" are equal to the flesh which will be saved. The flesh is presented as a constituent part of a human being, although weak. The parallelism suggests that spirit here also implies the human spirit. In that case "the spirit" would be the will of humans which is in accordance with God, as is the case in Ps 51:14.[159] It seems like "the spirit" is what is willing to watch and pray (γρηγορεῖτε καὶ προσεύχεσθε). The "flesh" would then be a part of humans which is unwilling or opposed to

[157] Cf. Matera 1986, 95–96; Schnackenburg 2002, 271.

[158] Much in the sense of the Rabbinic distinction between יצר הרע and יצר הטב mentioned in relation to Mt 6:9ff.

[159] So Kuhn 1952.

prayer. As already argued, Matthew emphasises that prayer does not bring about the required change, only God's answer does (cf. Mt 6:1–7:11).[160]

The passage describing the arrival of Judas brings further light on prayer in the Gethsemane scene. The disciples are unknowing of the decisive moment before them and fail their first test when they attack those who come to arrest Jesus (v. 51). They cannot pray as Jesus has called them to. They do not take up/receive their crosses (10:38; 16:24).[161] Verses 53–54 state that Jesus could call for legions of angels, but chooses not to (v. 53). This further cements the divine ordination of the events before him. God has set them out "in the Scripture" (v. 54). The disciples' misunderstanding is presented as a failure to read the Scriptures, continuing the emphasis on right interpretation. Indirectly the audience is led along with the correct interpretation which, according to Matthew, is the person of Jesus himself. The Gethsemane scene shows how the Scriptures are enacted in his life through prayer. The result is that prayer is presented as a performance of tradition.

27:46 Last Words of Jesus

The passion story starts with a prayer in Gethsemane and ends with a prayer at the cross. Jesus has been abandoned by his disciples (26:56, 69–75), and now apparently even by God (cf. the paradox with "God-with-us" in 1:24). The scene was prepared for in Gethsemane where it came to be described as the will of God.[162] In that sense it is an answer to prayer. The replacement of the by now well established address 'Father,' with the less intimate address "God" paints a picture of abandonment and pain.[163] In fact the language continues that of the Psalms of Lament found in the Gethsemane scene (cf. the "loud voice" Psalm 17:7; 21:3, 6, 24; 68:4

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[160] Here "the 'flesh' represents human weakness over against the desire of the 'inner self' to do the will of God." France 2007, 1006.

[161] 20:23 still makes a distinction. The Sons of Zebedee will (future), share the cup, but not the glory of the one who sits on the throne.

[162] "Though in Gethsemane Jesus found assurance that drinking the cup was his Father's will, Ps 22:1 on his lips on the cross may be seen as a vestige of the concern that led to his Gethsemane prayers." Nolland 2005, 1208.

[163] "Not until we understand his abandonment by the God and Father whose imminence and closeness he had proclaimed in a unique, gracious and festive way, can we understand what was distinctive about his death. Just as there was a unique fellowship with God in his life and preaching, so in his death there was a unique abandonment by God." Moltmann 1974, 149.

LXX, Ez 11:13, repeated in v. 50). The last utterance itself quotes Psalm 22. This tradition does, as already noted, emphasise the shout against God as a legitimate part of a dialogical piety.[164] In it there is no explanation of suffering or a way of bearing it. It is understood as a way of keeping the connection to God.[165] As regards Matthean prayer Jesus can here be understood as an example of faith. This is shown in the use of *my* God which retains the lordship of God. Jesus is already left by God (ἐγκατέλιπες aor.), but still prays. This can be understood as a central thought in the Psalms of Lament. The lament is a form of reminding God by appealing to his character, and believing in the surety of his answer (cf. 16:21c "and on the third day be raised").

Matthew has made the death of Jesus a paradigm for his followers. The passion prediction of 16:21 is followed by the cross-bearing speech of 16:24–25: "let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it." This seems to be the logical conclusion of the initial rehearsal of the *Shema*. God alone is to be served (4:10), even when it means not serving oneself. This scene qualifies the accounts of unlimited access to God and assured answers (7:7–11; 18:19; 21:22; 11:25–27). Answer is assured insofar as it is in accordance with God's will. This is prepared for in the Gethsemane scene in which Jesus himself lays down his life. Yet, to Matthew the dynamic implies an inversion. It is exactly because he lays down his life that he gains it (10:39; 16:25; 19:29). This is a paradigmatic aspect of the Christology which Matthew uses in the prayer-teaching. The ideal pray-ers who serve God above all else will by necessity be led to deny themselves. In this sense, the Matthean prayer theology is an outworking of his understanding of the cross.

28:16–20 Worship of Jesus

Matthew does not conclude his story with the cross but continues through to the resurrection and the continued presence of Jesus. In the last saying of the Gospel worship is referred to as an inclusion with 4:9–10. Throughout the narrative the word *proskuneo* (προσκυνέω) has been used of reactions to Jesus in a double manner (2:11; 4:9; 9:18; 14:33). Jesus is the proper recipient of homage. One time the meaning of the word approaches that

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[164] Luz 2002, 343. Cf. also Miller 1994, 68–85.

[165] A lament keeps the pray-er's connection to God. So de Vos 2005, 228.

of worship, when the disciples revere the figure approaching them on the water (14:33). That they do not wholly understand is shown by the simple fact that they later leave him. It is after the death and resurrection that they can understand him. Finally, they truly worship him when they meet him on the mountain in Galilee (vv. 16–17). That the stronger connotation of the verb is implied seems to be required by the reference to some doubting (v. 17 οἱ δὲ ἐδίστασαν). The 'doubt' is not to be read as a qualification of the act of seeing but the act of worshipping. All saw him, but only some worshipped. For the implied audience, this meaning of "worship" (προσκυνέω) is imported into the other scenes as well. This includes Jesus in the strict monotheism and call to worship that was set out in the temptation scene (4:9–10). The temptation scene is in fact paralleled in the mountain setting and in the theme of power over the world. The narrative of Matthew starts out with a radical Jewish monotheism and ends by integrating Jesus into it, as the disciples worship him. This exalted status of Jesus is also implied by his continued presence with the disciples, in their ministry (vv. 19–20) and in their prayer (ch. 18). Now the disciples can proceed as teachers who have been apprentices with the Teacher. Prayer is central in this teaching task (v. 20 πάντα ὅσα ἐνετειλάμην cf. 6:9f).

Narrative Progression: Passion Narrative

The passion story is, as is appropriate, more sombre than the earlier sections of Matthew, even in regards to prayer. The positive teaching of the ministry of Jesus is qualified in Gethsemane and the cross. The reference to "all things" possible in prayer (21:22) can only mean all things in accordance with the will of God. It can be observed that in the passion prayer is mainly used to develop the Christology. It aids in the explanation of the necessity of a crucified Messiah. What happens is a result of Jesus' intimate communication with the Father. Any paradigmatic traits are derivations of that primary aspect. At this stage of the narrative Jesus stands alone. A prayer scene is used to drive home the point, that now the only ones who remain are Jesus and God. Between Gethsemane and the resurrection, the disciples are outsiders (cf. Peter's denial 26:69–75). In Gethsemane the disciples fade out of the story. However, they are reintroduced again at the very end. They are the ones who will continue Jesus' work as he leaves. All the while the audience has been guided along with Jesus. They follow him at all times of the narrative, as he follows them at all times of their 'narrative' (18:19–20).

Conclusion

Construction of the Ideal Pray-er

In what follows I will summarise Matthew's strategies for impacting the audience according to the outline described in the introduction. Matthew's narrative contains extended sections of direct teaching, part of which concern prayer (point a: teaching by Jesus). The speeches are events or acts that fit non-obtrusively into the plot.[166] They speak directly to the implied audience of the Gospel. In Matthew, Jesus' teaching is parallel to his preaching, cf. Mt 4:23; 9:35; 11:1. A major part of that which Jesus reveals is conveyed in teaching. Jesus is *the* Teacher (διδάσκαλος especially 23:8).[167] The material of the Sermon on the Mount is the most important teaching in Matthew, and the Our Father its highpoint. It can be said to present the direct speech of the ideal pray-er. Prayer is a major part of Jesus' commands which they teach to those who become disciples (28:19–20). Yet, Jesus is not only a teacher, and discipleship is not only pursuing a certain teaching. In rabbinical schools the student sought out the teacher, while in Matthew, Jesus himself calls his followers to follow him. In that sense the model of Matthew is more of a prophetic kind; Jesus' call is the call of God. The teaching of Jesus is inherently connected to his person and that which he accomplishes. This brings the discussion over to how the disciples can be thought to relate to Jesus.

Throughout the Gospel, the characters of the disciples are developed through association with Jesus (point b: paradigmatic and unique aspects of the character of Jesus). The teaching is inseparable from the character of Jesus. The Gospel fuses the teaching with Jesus in a way that makes his life and death its foremost illustration. In that sense, the very explicit directions on how to act are to be seen in light of the character of Jesus. This further means that Matthew develops an implicit commentary on how to appropriate the surface level of the narrative. The teaching makes sense to those who follow the Teacher as the narrative requires. As will be

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[166] So Kingsbury 1988, 105, 113. Contra Bacon 1918; Bacon 1930. Byrskog's argument that the narrative description of Jesus' life is primarily a legitimation of his teaching reverses Matthew's thorough integration. See Byrskog 1994, 306–308.

[167] Hahn 1974, 79; Byrskog 1994, 199–21; cf. Byrskog 2002, 83–84. Cf. Mt 9:35; 11:1; 13:54; 17:24; 19:16; 21:23; 22:16, 24, 33, 36; 23:8; 26:18, 55; 28:20. Orton describes Jesus' similarity to the ideal scribe of apocalyptic literature who communicated revealed wisdom. Orton 1989, 162–163.

seen this includes worshipping him (28:16–20). This means that the teaching as such is made part of a religious whole which includes Jesus' acts of salvation. In what follows I will discuss the unique and paradigmatic aspects in one paragraph each.

Jesus is not a direct paradigm for the ideal pray-er, as he arguably is in Luke. Matthew emphasises Jesus' unique and exalted status, even within the narrative. It can be observed that Jesus is a static character in Matthew, more so than in Mark and Luke (that he still prays in Matthew, suggests that the act is understood as basic to interaction with the Father). True, the disciples are called to follow him (cf. 4:19; 8:22; 9:9; 19:21). Yet, Jesus is unique as the "Son of Man" and "Son of God" (cf. for instance 3:17 or 16:16). Jesus is generated by God (1:18) and only does his will. He is the one who came from God (Mt 5:17; 8:29; 9:13; 10:34, 35; 20:28).[168] When the words of Jesus' prayers are recounted, he uses the address 'Father.' Within the narrative, this constructs a unique kinship between Jesus and God; at places 'Son' is even used as a direct rhetorical opposite to 'Father' (11:27; 28:19). To Matthew the prayers of Jesus are a dialogue with the Father. The relationship the disciples have to God is not analogous to that between Jesus and God, yet it is not disconnected from it. In so far as they are connected to Jesus, they will be connected to the Father. Their prayer is directly connected to Jesus as he is present with them when they pray (18:19–20).

The presentation of Jesus as unique is at the same time a way to present the disciples' new relationship to God (cf. 1:21; 10:32; 20:28). Jesus is in his very person included in their prayer to the Father (18:19–20). Jesus is present to them, after his resurrection. Then he can call the disciples his "brothers" (28:10; the same is implied in 25:40). The disciples are to believe in Jesus and worship him (28:17 includes Jesus in the *Shema*). Then they relate to the "Father" (28:19). In that sense the disciples are dynamic in Matthew; they are in a different position after the resurrection (20:28; 26:28). To Matthew, this includes a new form of relation to the Father, including a new form of prayer. The prayer teaching only makes sense with the whole in view.

It is often argued that one of Matthew's main concerns is to relate Jesus and his followers to Judaism at large.[169] This concern also shows up in

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[168] Cf. Gathercole on the Christological implications of Jesus being 'sent.' Gathercole 2006, 83–88, 284–292.

[169] Marshall 2004, 115.

the material on prayer (point c: ideals from the Old Testament). Matthew uses the theocentricity of the *Shema* as a basis for his whole narrative and for prayer as well (4:1 and throughout). In general it can be observed that Jesus can be thought to follow a general Jewish piety (cf. exegesis of 6:5–8). Moreover, his pious character is constructed with the help of the types of Moses and also Elisha which are laden with associations of an intimate relation to God. These are carried over in the disciples who follow Jesus, their Teacher. As regards the concrete language of prayer, it is often psalmic. Another OT aspect of the form is the general covenantal and dialogical tone of Jesus' prayer. More than that prayer is presented as an active participation in the covenant between God and his people (especially 5:1–7:29).

In the construction of an ideal pray-er the contrast to contemporary Judaism is just as important as the continuity. Matthew is clearly engaged in a battle of interpretations on the issue of piety. In a number of aspects Jesus is portrayed as the normative interpretation of tradition, in contrast to the religious leaders of his day. Jesus is in his person the fulfilment of promises (1:20–23; 2:15, 17, 23 and throughout). Somehow the community of his followers are thought to continue the 'true intentions' of the Temple (being a 'house of prayer'). As such they are the place of the presence of Jesus in their midst (he is himself "more than the Temple" 12:6).[170] This teaching can be thought to capitalise on the OT material which discusses a new covenant apart from the sacrificial system, in a new heart etc (Is 29; Jer 31:31–34). The 'presence' is used as an experiential verification of their election. When they pray they are now thought to respond to the promises of old. On this account, prayer functions as a performance of tradition.[171] Jesus' teaching on prayer sets his followers out in their contemporary religious setting.[172]

In Matthew there is a play on the pre-understanding of the implied audience (point d: play on pre-knowledge). With the place given to teaching, Matthew appears at first sight to be much more explicit in the development of an ideal than the other Gospels. However, like the other Gospels,

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[170] Cf. discussions of where God is present in Rabbinic Judaism. Cf. Eshel 1999. Le Déaut argues that "la synagogue est devenue dans la diaspora (cf. Daniel 13, 28 selon la Septante), puis partout après 70, surtout une maison de prière." Le Déaut 1975, 68.

[171] Remembering the initial suggestion that Matthew is concerned with the study of Torah as worship.

[172] To Byrskog, "Jesus is as teacher the essential identity marker for a group of pupils." Byrskog 1994, 235. Wilkins argues that "Jesus had to clarify for those who followed him his specific form of the master-disciple relationship." Wilkins 1995, 221.

there is also here a connection to the character of Jesus at all levels of the narrative. The teaching presented in Matthew is insider information (cf. for instance 5:1). More importantly, it is information that can be appropriated by a follower of Jesus after the cross (after the resurrection, the disciples can proceed in Jesus' ministry 28:16–20). The result is that the teaching material is subject to the presentation of the character of Jesus. Not in the sense of copying him, but in being somehow enabled by him. This further means that the prayer-teaching is subject to the same kind of implicit communication as that found in the other Gospels. It is teaching which communicates to the insiders who *know* Jesus. However, Matthew does not draw on this strategy to the same extent as Mark or John.

Matthew follows the basic narrative outline of all the canonical Gospels (point e: narrative progression). However, the Gospel refers to the continued presence of Jesus at all stages of the narrative, more so than the other Synoptics (1:23; 18:19–20). As regards the reading experience this fact necessitates cross-referencing, not only attention to the narrative progression. The narrative progression is used to develop prayer in the sense of displaying a before and after the cross. However, the teaching on prayer at times uses a post-resurrection angle (as in the reference to Jesus' presence among the pray-ers 18:18–20). The result is that the outcome of the narrative is obvious to the audience at all stages of its progress.

The Matthean use of contrastive characterisation is an important tool for providing a set of graded and valued ideals (point f: characterisation). Jesus is portrayed with a large group of various opponents (antagonists). The result is a text where there are clear lines of demarcation between the disciples who follow Jesus (the insiders), and others.[173] This might be seen as an ambiguity in the light of the call for positive relations to others (5:44). The prayer-material also contains a number of contrastive constructions. It is Jesus and his followers who are the correct interpreters of tradition, not the 'religious experts.' The division between the followers of Jesus and others is cemented through the call to be engaged in mission, and even the teaching to pray for enemies. In Matthew, prayer itself presupposes a relation to God which those who are not followers of Jesus do not have. They do not do the will of God.[174]

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[173] The critique of other Jews and the Temple is in line with the intra-Jewish rhetoric of the day. Dunn 2003, 281.

[174] Prayer here functions as identity-creating activity.

Matthew integrates the teaching on prayer with the eschatology (point g: eschatology). In this Gospel there are indications of an imminent expectation of the end (10:23; 16:28; 24:34). The disciples are called to watch and pray in response to this situation (26:41). Matthew refers to the second coming of Christ as a *parousia* which his disciples must wait for (24:3, 27, 37, 39). As regards prayer and ethics the Sermon on the Mount appears to refer to an ideal which is not realised at present. Prayer is presented as the way in which better righteousness is possible. Not as a direct effect of the act itself, but as an answer from God. Prayer is thought to refer to an ideal reality which is not present to the followers of Jesus at present. This reality is used as the goal towards which both Jesus and his followers are directed; the complete reign of God, and the display of his holiness (6:9–11 and throughout). It can be thought to receive salvation at the great judgment which features large in the Matthean eschatology (it pertains even to disciples 13:24–30, 36–43). Compared to Mk 13 the eschatological discourse of Matthew contains more material on judgement and being prepared for it (25:1–46). This judgement is appropriately prepared for through prayer (26:41).

Description of the Ideal Pray-er

In Matthew the ideal pray-er is above all called to pray with the words of the Our Father (6:9–13). These petitions contain the gist of the Matthean prayer teaching. Arguably the petition for God's will is of particular importance as it is repeated in the Gethsemane scene (26:42). Other important subjects include the extension of the community (9:38), and the restoration of erring members (18:19–20 unique to Mt). The prayer-material of Matthew can be understood in light of two basic theological themes used in the Gospel; a foundational theocentricity and the proper response it requires.

The temptation scene establishes the theocentric basis of the whole narrative through the resolution of Jesus' temptation in the *Shema* (4:10).[175] Uttering the words of the Our Father is a central response the narrative attempts to elicit in the reader. This prayer relates the pray-er in a normative way to all aspects of life; that is, life as here defined. In this context, prayer as Jesus teaches must be seen as an activity which avoids

[175] In Matthew the theocentricity can be thought to be more explicitly expressed than in the other Synoptics. Mark and Luke seem to take the theocentricity more as a presupposition than as something which needs to be emphasised.

idolatry. The prayer in 6:9–13 expresses a theocentric piety and mode of life in defining legitimate desires. Foremost of these is the petition "your will be done" which is repeated in Gethsemane (26:42). The ideal pray-er serves the will of God as defined in the teaching of Jesus (including his life and ministry). The common focus on deeds and righteousness in Matthew must be qualified by reference to its source in prayer. The text can be thought to drive the audience to prayer as the only solution to its demands. Moreover, in the Sermon on the Mount the needs of the audience are defined together with the way to achieve them. The result is that in Matthew the follower of Jesus is defined from without. It is the teaching of Jesus and the OT which provide the definition of the individual. Matthew presents a picture of a God who actively seeks for the prayers of humans (6:8–9). In this sense, prayer is an effect of the picture presented of God, it actually requires prayer.

In the following three paragraphs I will indicate three aspects which describe the response of prayer. In Matthew prayer is a covenant act.[176] Prayer is the way to respond to God who calls humans through Jesus.[177] It leads his followers to true righteousness (ch. 6–9) as he answers their prayers. To pray is to follow the teachings of Jesus, and will 'inevitably' lead to displaying the required fruit. It is a way of sustaining a perceived covenant relationship, and is a sharing in the work of God (6:9–11, 9:38). The pray-er is understood as God's agent on earth continuing the ministry of Jesus. The covenant perspective also means that throughout Matthew, prayer is seen as a communal activity of those who share the same Father (cf. for instance 6:9). On the other hand, it can be observed that the community is thought to depend on God in prayer (ch. 18). For Matthew, prayer is learned behaviour. It was taught by Jesus, and now by the community which keeps the memory of his teaching (cf. 28:19 μαθητεύσατε refers to "making Christians").[178]

In the Gospel of Matthew prayer is a dialogue with God. In the exegesis it has also been observed that prayer is seen as an answer to being addressed. This is not primarily presented as a voice within the narrative

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[176] 'Covenant' is here loosely used as the basis and rules of the divine-human interaction. Jesus refers to a new covenant, but it is not self-evident what the 'old covenant' means.

[177] Cf. Kingsbury 1988, 111; Luz 1989, 206–208.

[178] To Luz Matthew "emphasised that it is in the disciples of the earthly Jesus that the nature of the church, including the church of his own day, is visible." Luz 2005, 138. Wilkins argues that Matthew can be seen as "a manual on discipleship." The openness of the texts on prayer begs the question of what tradition (oral and liturgical) originally accompanied the text. Cf. Wilkins 1995, 172.

but as God's voice in tradition. The act of prayer therefore both presupposes an address and awaits an answer. The mentioned tradition and its appropriation in prayer enable an understanding of the world in which "events" can be seen as answers by God. Dialogue also includes that which is seen as answer to prayer in the earthly experience of the pray-er.[179] The Gethsemane scene also maintains the voice of Jesus in contrast to God's ordained will. The will of God is supreme, but must be accepted willingly (26:36–46). Throughout, prayer is presented with language analogous to that of normal inter-human communication (that is, as appropriate to an asymmetrical relationship). This dialogue includes the pray-er in a process of change.[180] In prayer the audience appropriates God's will.

To Matthew humility is essential to the ideal pray-er. This comes to expression in many ways in the prayer material. A simple example of this is the way in which the prayer-address 'Father' implies childhood on the part of the pray-er. The teaching in 7:9–11 also draws on this theme. In a number of the prayer-texts terms denoting childhood and a general lowliness are used (νηπίος, μικρός).[181] Matthew constructs prayer as a general weakness before God. The appropriation of the teaching on prayer sets the pray-er in a situation of dependence. The theological result is to put a priority on God's initiative and grace.[182] A similar humble attitude is found in the call to pray for enemies (5:44) and display forgiveness in prayer (6:12). Here the humility is also extended to the interaction with other people. In one sense, this can be seen as a transposition of the cross to discipleship (as is done explicitly in 10:38; 16:24). Thereby, prayer is made one of the surest ways to follow Jesus and his sacrificial life.

Some Further Anthropological Reflections

The prayer material of Matthew displays a contrastive understanding of humanity, despite the call to pray for enemies. It is true that in prayer the followers of Jesus are called to act in accordance with the loving character of the Father. Yet, the strong call to prayer, and the way Jesus is presented as enabling a different relation to God, results in a distinct division of

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[179] The earthly and heavenly are integrated in Matthew's story. "Spiritual" or "supernatural" and "physical" are anachronistic terms.

[180] Matthean spirituality must "be worked out to be worked at." Barton 1992, 29.

[181] Légasse 1969, 338. "le pauvre, humble et fidèle, 'le plus petit parmi vous tous,' ou encore, en terme figuré le παιδίον incarne aux yeux de l'évangeliste la norme de toute grandeur religieuse." An emphasis shared with Luke.

[182] Cf. Légasse 1969, 340.

humanity. Jesus is either accepted or rejected. If the 'better righteousness' and salvation are not prayed for they are not administered, leaving the non-pray-er unworthy before God. Not to pray is equal to not believing. This is further strengthened by the task the followers of Jesus have towards the outsiders, they must be made into disciples. Prayer strengthens this understanding of humanity since part of what must be prayed for is exactly that task (9:38). Similar thoughts are found in the differentiation vis-à-vis Jewish piety. This is obvious in the repeated controversy with Jewish leaders (especially ch. 23). To Matthew the prayers of the community come to fill the function of the Temple. The result is to present the follower of Jesus as a member of the only group with a legitimate relationship to God.[183] When they pray, they actually exercise the contrastive understanding of humanity, emphasising their identity in a religious act.

The theocentricity of Matthew means that humanity is defined from without. The call of Jesus is seen as God's address which defines the human predicament.[184] The saving acts of Jesus presented in the Gospel also describe what humanity must be freed from.[185] Take the example of 'sin' which to Matthew is a major problem (6:12, 14–15; 9:2, 5, 6; 18:27, 32, 35). This 'problem' is one of the major ones Jesus saves his followers from (1:21; cf. 20:28; 26:28). Yet, to receive forgiveness, his followers must pray for it. The prayer for forgiveness is even included in the paradigmatic prayer intended for continual use (6:12). The result is that prayer accepts the definition of humanity given in the narrative. It performs this definition in the religious praxis of the pray-er. In a situation of conflicting definitions of humanity the pray-er pursues one which is perceived as a total commitment and dependence upon God. This is presented as a form of dialogue, yet one in which the outcome is already certain. It is the will of God which is attained to by the pray-er.

The acceptance of a definition from without involves the pray-er in a process of change. The pray-er internalises the ideal presented in the tradition, and 'receives' them in answer to prayer. To Matthew it is necessary to display the right kind of righteousness (δικαιοσύνη) to enter the kingdom of heaven (5:20; "enter life" 18:8–9). It is those who endure who will be saved (10:22//24:13), a thought also used in the prayer-teaching of

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[183] Pauline discussions of the 'continued' role of 'Israel' are not found in Matthew. Cf. Rom 9–11.

[184] The Jesus tradition as the true exegesis of the OT tradition should be seen as the 'call' in general terms.

[185] On Matthew's view of salvation cf. Luomanen 1998; Gundry 2005.

Gethsemane (26:41). However, to Matthew it is only God who can accomplish salvation (19:25–26). The exegesis of the Sermon on the Mount displayed how prayer is understood as that which enables the righteousness called for. In prayer the right things are pursued, willed and received, which amounts to a sharing in God's works (6:9–11; 9:38). In that sense it is a way of producing fruits by heeding Jesus' teaching (as demanded by 3:8, 10; 7:17–19; 12:33; 13:23; 21:43). There is in this covenantal thinking a form of direct cooperation between the works of humans and the works of God which enable them.[186]

In prayer the followers of Jesus are thought to relate directly to God. Moreover, Jesus himself is thought to be 'present' in their prayers. At the same time the act of prayer implies absence of that which is prayed for. The kingdom, God's sanctification, the disciples' forgiveness and righteousness are not wholly present in their experience. This points to the basic eschatological outlook of Matthew. In the Gospel prayer straddles heaven and earth, and refers to God's direct involvement in creation. At the same time it construes God's absence from creation and from the pray-er. The result is that the follower of Jesus is differentiated from God as a praying self. The absence of God, and waiting for answers, prepares a logical room for faith. As faith is central to the relation to God (cf. 6:30; 8:10 and throughout) the absence is understood as constitutive of the existence of the pray-er.[187] In this sense prayer is a marker of the eschatological tension of Matthew.

[186] Whether individuals can 'freely' choose to follow God in the first place is unclear.

[187] The absence/presence dynamic used with regards to Jesus recalls similar imagery for God in the OT. Cf. Terrien 1978.

CHAPTER THREE

MARK

Introduction

At first sight Mark seems less interested in the subject of prayer than the other Synoptics.[1] Jesus is depicted as praying only three times (1:35; 6:46; 14:32–42). The more extended prayer-teaching of Matthew is not found in this Gospel. Neither is Jesus a paradigmatic pray-er as in Luke. Rather Mark's use of prayer is more implicit, like much of what is communicated in this Gospel. It is clear that discipleship is a central concern for Mark. Throughout the Gospel a number of mainly negative scenes and sayings are used to describe the disciples (4:13, 35–41; 6:51–52; 7:18; 8:33; 9:32; 10:32; 14:10, 20, 43).[2] This is balanced by some positive scenes (3:13–19; 4:10; 6:7–13) and above all the grace of God displayed in Jesus' victory.[3] The result is that discipleship is portrayed with realism. Central in discipleship is the aspect of 'faith' (1:15; 2:5; 4:40; 5:34; 8:27–29; 9:23–24; 11:22; cf. also the rebuke of unbelief in 3:5; 6:2; 8:10–13, 17–21). A programmatic statement is included in the introduction to the Gospel: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near, repent, and believe in the good news." This is further emphasised in the central command of Jesus to "have faith in God" (11:22). As the narrative is brought to a close, this faith in God is tied inseparably to the cross—God's conclusive act. There the centurion confesses that Jesus is the Son of God (15:39), in contrast to those who react scornfully (15:32). Throughout the narrative, this confession is withheld from earthly characters (the demons seem to have some insight into his identity, for instance at 5:7, and God calls him his Son in 9:7). It is also clear that the cross is a central image used in the description of discipleship (8:31–38).[4] Further it must be maintained that, to Mark, prayer is an important expression of faith (11:24). Read in the context of faith, prayer

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[1] O'Brien argues that Mark has little interest in prayer. O'Brien 1973, 116. So also Ott 1965, 16.

[2] Gnilka 1978, 26.

[3] God is portrayed as a free agent working the disciples' salvation: he calls freely 1:16–20; 3:13 and gives his secret 4:11, doing the impossible 10:27.

[4] Following Jesus is "Kreuzesnachfolge." Gnilka 1978, 32.

does indeed have a central role in the Gospel despite the limited space devoted to it as a 'theme.' Mark uses a different strategy than the other Synoptics in the construction of an ideal pray-er. Here implicit communication, even irony, comes more to the fore.

Sharyn Echols Dowd's 1986 thesis *Prayer, Power, and the Problem of Suffering* is a compositional critical study of the place of prayer in Marcan theology.[5] Her view of Mark as didactic biography "whose purpose is to shape the community that takes its identity from the central figure," is close to the concerns of this study.[6] So is also the concern to indicate response-inviting dynamics.[7] Echols Dowd relates prayer to the Marcan themes of faith, miracles, and suffering. In the exegesis there is a focus on philosophical issues in the Gospel's historical setting (omnipotence and theodicy in Greco-Roman and Jewish texts). At the basis of the study is the attempt to explain the tension between the faith sayings in the prayer teaching of Ch. 11 and the Gethsemane scene, which some interpreters see as incompatible.[8] Echols Dowd first establishes the place of Mk 11:20–25 in its literary and historical context and then continues to argue that Mark's discussion of prayer is a discussion of theodicy since it reconciles "the theme of divine power with the necessity of suffering."[9]

Mark uses a number of recurrent patterns, some of which are found in the prayer-material. The presence of two and three step structural patterns is often noted and is part of a gradual development of the plot and the character of Jesus.[10] The presence of the revelation of Jesus as the Son of God is one such important threefold pattern (1:11; 9:7; 15:39, cf. also 1:1). In this context it is interesting to note that Mark refers to Jesus praying three times, once at the outset of his ministry (1:35), once at the middle (6:46), and once at the end of his ministry (14:32–42). The first reference introduces Jesus ministry, the third concludes it (as an incipit and inclusio). The effect is to suggest that Jesus is in constant communion with

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[5] Echols Dowd 1988. It is the only published monologue on prayer in Mark known to me. Cf. also the unpublished dissertation *Petitionary Prayer in Mark and in the Q Material*. Marrion 1974.

[6] Echols Dowd 1988, 26.

[7] The text is "continually bringing the community back to the presence of God." Echols Dowd 1988, 165.

[8] Echols Dowd 1988, 1.

[9] Echols Dowd 1988, 33, 151f.

[10] Neirynck 1972. For triadic constructions: Neirynck 1972, 110–112; Tannehill 1975, 43–45. Neusner shows that the pattern of three is a common mnemonic structure in the Mishnah. Neusner 1985, 62.

God.[11] One feature that stands out clearly is the division of the material into a section on Jesus' ministry throughout Palestine and one that deals with the Passion. Actually the Gospel can be seen as a two-step progression where "the second step clarifies and makes the first step precise."[12]

Ministry Narrative 1:1–13:37

The Gospel of Mark is introduced with a short prologue that constructs an implied reader which has the outcome of the narrative in view. Jesus Christ is good news and is of the Spirit (1:4–13 mentions the Spirit three times). The introduction is abrupt and compared to the other Synoptics Mark jumpstarts the narrative proper with some short notes on the baptism and temptation of Jesus. The reference to baptism could be read as an introduction to the narrative which highlights its implications for an implied reader who has already been initiated into the 'mystery' (through baptism). From the very start it is clear that the writing is not wholly transparent, it communicates and interacts with knowledge and tradition that lies outside the text. To some interpreters there is even a basic 'secret' at the base of the Gospel (cf. 4:11; 8:27–30).[13] Jesus withdraws from his disciples and the crowds, his answers are at times close to riddles, and the disciples have a hard time understanding him. The text plays on this secrecy and the responses of the unknowing disciples in addressing an initiated audience. There is an emphasis on being either an insider or outsider (4:10–12). The characters of the narrative search for the Messiah (1:1), a search in which the audience is given a privileged position. They know this from the outset.[14] This dynamical use of irony and paradox is also drawn upon in the construction of an ideal pray-er.

In one sense Jesus is a type for the implied audience to follow, as in the baptism scene just mentioned. At the same time, Jesus is separated from his followers. Mark achieves this in part through the already mentioned incomprehension of the disciples and above all through the close association between Jesus and God. This is also evident in the prayer material where the disciples never pray *with* Jesus. The agency involved in prayer is not easily sorted out when it comes to Jesus and God (see for instance

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[11] As argued by Lightfoot 1951.
[12] Rhoads and Michie 1982, 112.
[13] Cf. Wrede 1901.
[14] Mark writes to Christians. So Best 1983, 18–20; Marcus 2000, 25ff.

the section 'Prayer to Jesus?'). Jesus is engaged in a cosmic battle with the forces of evil (8:33).[15] At the very beginning of the narrative of Jesus' ministry (1:9ff), he engages in a battle with the devil in the wilderness (1:13). The defeat of demons is highlighted throughout (1:21–28; 5:1–20; 9:14–29; cf. also 1:32–34, 39; 3:11–13), and explained as a binding of the "strong man" (3:27).[16] Moreover, healing is seen as close to exorcisms (1:31, 41–43; 7:33–35), characterising Jesus as powerful (cf. δύναμαι 1:40; 2:7; 5:3; 8:4; 9:3, 22, 28; 10:26–27; 14:35–36).[17] In this Jesus appears as the prime agent of the Father's action. Part of his role is to relate the disciples to God in the right manner, partly through prayer.

1:35 Jesus Alone at Prayer I

This is the first of three prayer scenes depicting Jesus alone at prayer.[18] Like in most of Mark the characterisation is sparse, only recounting simple acts. With a double time reference (πρωῒ ἔννυχα λίαν ἀναστάς) Mark gives a lifelike quality to the character of Jesus. He went out "when it was still dark" which might hint at the regular Jewish prayer times. The imperfect should be read to denote a sustained period of prayer.[19] The scene describes Jesus as more 'pious' than his followers, who at this time were presumably sleeping. Also the way in which Jesus leaves from the others draws on the typical biblical type of a charismatic who comes and goes as he pleases.[20] However, in the light of the prologue, the reference can be thought to be more than that. It is a way of construing the special connection between Jesus and the Father (the epithet Father is implicit in the address of Jesus as Son in 1:11).

The immediately preceding miracle stories seem to imply that Jesus performs miracles in his own power. Some of his followers told him of the illness of Simon's mother-in-law, and he responds by healing her. Yet, the outline of the scene suggests that he is thought of as more than a miracle

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[15] Collins 1992, 27. Mark is "an apocalyptic historical monograph." Cf. Marcus 2000, 70–73.

[16] Käsemann argues that Jesus came to rid the earth of demons. Käsemann 1969, 55.

[17] "Healing tradition and performance of exorcisms are an integral part of Marcan christology and discipleship." Robbins 1973, 16. Likewise Best 1986, 177–196. Contra Weeden who argues for a Marcan rejection of the miracle stories. Cf. Weeden 1971.

[18] Source critical issues will not be discussed as the focus is on the final product. In contrast to Bultmann 1968, 155; Gnilka 1978, 88. Interestingly the Lucan parallel does not refer to prayer (Lk 4:42).

[19] Taylor 1966, 180.

[20] Marcus 2000, 203. Cf. 1 Kgs 18:12; 2 Kgs 2:16, Acts 8:39–40; Jn 3:8.

worker. Mark's miracles stories are ambiguous as to the agents involved. At times Jesus performs acts that in the OT are proper to God alone (the closest example is 2:5–12).[21] Through these Jesus is associated with God.[22] Jesus does not act on his own account but through the Holy Spirit (made clear through Marcan irony in 3:20–30).

In 1:14–20 Jesus is presented as a figure to be followed. This is surely on account of his unique identity. Yet, exactly this construction sets up problems. If 'followed' implies in any way following in his footsteps, i.e. acting like him, the disciples are in for a major problem. Following Jesus is not a straightforward task. This is also evident in the manner in which Jesus at times withdraws from the disciples. Here Jesus leaves a successful scene behind to pray. His disciples set out searching for him, with Simon providing a type of this for the audience (v. 36). Jesus must be sought out. The disciples are not able to do that at this stage of the narrative; there is no progress in this matter on their part (1:35, 45; 6:31, 32, 35). Still they are accepted by Jesus who continues to lead them. The audience, who know the 'secret,' are in a different position. They know the outcome of the narrative and the salvific acts of Jesus. In light of these they can follow Jesus, even to his places of prayer. That this is not simply a question of imitating Jesus will become clear as the narrative progresses.

6:41 and 8:6 Feeding Miracles

Chapters 6 through 8 are often seen as a central panel of illustrative stories (6:6 to 8:20 or 26). The miracles recounted are signs of the kingdom and provide characterisation of Jesus. The two feeding miracles are similar and the repetition adds emphasis and also development.[23] In 6:34 Jesus is portrayed as showing compassion in teaching, the feeding just follows suit. In 8:2 it is the feeding which expresses the compassion of Jesus.[24] In Mark the passages can be said to have a more prominent role than in Matthew.[25] The importance is shown in the relative length of the passages in a shorter Gospel and in the twice repeated rebuke of the disciples'

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[21] In 2:5–12 the endnote is on the praise of *God* (2:12).

[22] Cf. Glöckner on the Marcan use of the Psalms in the miracle stories. Glöckner 1983, 33.

[23] For literary relations between the two Marcan scenes see Jenkins 1942, 87–111; Klostermann 1950, 74–75; Taylor 1966, 628–632. For possible source material cf. Pesch 1977, 277–281; Fowler 1978, 68–90. On duality as a Marcan tool cf. Neirynck 1972.

[24] A distinction between a Jewish and Gentile feeding is too hypothetical. Cranfield 1966, 223; Hurtado 1989, 123.

[25] Cf. exegesis of Mt 14:19 and 15:36.

misunderstanding. A number of very different observations can be made with regards to prayer in these scenes.

Again there are hints of Jesus following basic Jewish prayer customs (as in 1:35). The utterances spoken at the instigation of the miracle resemble the Jewish custom of saying a blessing before a meal.[26] Also in Mark, Jesus is portrayed as a praying Jew. Jesus can be thought to follow the praxis of a Jewish head of house at meal time (cf. m. Ber 6:1 "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the world, who bringest forth bread from the earth.").[27] On this account the blessing is directed to God and is not spoken as a direct blessing of the bread. This portrayal of Jesus following some basic Jewish customs of prayer is also evident in the reference to the *Hallel* at the last meal (14:26).

The characterisation of Jesus can be thought to be ambiguous here as at other scenes. There is a clear prayer-gesture in the reference to the gaze to heaven (ἀναβλέψας εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν cf. also Jn 11:41).[28] Mark also refers to such a procedure in a later miracle scene (7:32–34). On this account it can be thought to provide an example for Jesus' followers (echoing prayers for God's miraculous provision Ex 16; 1 Kg 17:7–16; 2 Kg 4:1–7, 42–44). At the same time it maintains the connection between Jesus and God. Jesus exercises power in concurrence with his Father who has sent him (Jesus is sent 9:7 with 19). In 6:41 "blessed" (εὐλόγησεν) is parallel to "broke" (κατέκλασεν) and a blessing of the bread could be implied. In 8:7 Jesus blesses the fish (εὐλογήσας αὐτά), suggesting that these words led to the miracle.[29] Arguably, to Mark Jesus does what is God's prerogative, sharing his power in doing a creative miracle.

The formula in 8:6 is similar to the language in Lk 22:19 and 1 Cor 11:24 (it is 'Eucharistic').[30] The already mentioned similarity to Jewish meal prayers actually connects the scenes. The picture of an eschatological banquet lies close at hand as a conceptual background (Is 25:6–9). There are some evident differences in details that set the feedings apart from

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[26] As argued by Boobyer the words used (εὐλόγησν and εὐχαριστήσας) could be seen as a translation of a *Berakah*. Boobyer 1952. So also Cranfield 1966, 219.

[27] Cf. Roloff 1970, 244; Guelich 1989, 341. For Jewish meal blessings see Millgram 1971, 292–294. Cf. 2 Kgs 4:42–44. For giving thanks before a meal cf. Deut 8:10, Josephus *B.J.* 2:131, 1QS 6:4–5. Cf. further Roth 1988; Davies and Allison 1991, 484; Brown 1993, 131.

[28] 'Looking to heaven' as a prayer is also found in contemporary literature (Josephus *A.J.* 11.56). It is common in the OT, so Lohmeyer 1963, 127, n. 7.

[29] So Gnilka 1978, 303.

[30] Cf. Lohmeyer 1963, 127; Iersel 1964, 167–194; Taylor 1966, 324.

the later scene of the last supper.[31] For instance the reference to fish fits better into a messianic banquet imagery.[32] Still the parallel language suggests that the scenes should be interpreted in light of each other.[33] As interpretations of the "Eucharist," the feeding miracles maintain that the former is to be seen as an eschatological act.

In the narrative context, the confusion of the disciples in 6:35–38 picks up the theme of incomprehension that later becomes more pronounced (cf. 4:13). Even though they have witnessed the feeding miracles, they still do not understand the character of Jesus which is displayed in the feeding (6:52; 8:14–21). This emphasis is different than that found in the other Gospels. Matthew, for instance, follows up with a confession scene (Mt 14:33). There is probably a didactic intention in the depiction of the disciples as ignorant and yet acting as distributors; a form of realistic anthropology. It is God who works regardless of their limited realisation of his purposes. Moreover, the ignorance of the disciples further functions to highlight Jesus' ability; he is set apart from them. As regards the ideal, the disciples are increasingly used to drive the audience towards Jesus. This is the case both with the acceptance of his uniqueness and in the imitation of certain aspects of his behaviour, including prayer (developed more as the narrative progresses).

6:46 Jesus Alone at Prayer II

In 6:46 Jesus ascends a mountain to pray alone in the second such prayer reference of the Gospel. The reference is embedded in the scene of Jesus walking on the water, and follows immediately upon the first feeding miracle. Both this context and the reference to Jesus' abruptness are similar to the earlier passage (1:35). The ascension of the mountain again brings the thoughts to the character of Moses (cf. 3:13–19; 9:2–8. cf. Ex 24). Both prayer and the performance of miracles are basic to Jesus' ministry. The prayer-scenes serve to associate Jesus with God, and are hence Christological. In walking on the water Jesus is given characterisation that in the OT is used only of God (cf. Job 9:8; Pss 98:9–10; 107:29). Still, the miracle does not lead the disciple to a confession; the emphasis is still on their ignorance.

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[31] Some emphasise the difference from the Eucharist. Cf. Patsch 1971, 219–228; Pesch 1977, 352; Gnilka 1978, 261.

[32] Hiers and Kennedy 1976, 20–47.

[33] There is an indirect influence. So Iersel 1964, 171, 174–175; Patsch 1971, 227–228.

Verses 6:30–32 suggests that there is an intention to include the disciples in what is secret to the other characters of the narrative (v. 31 "come 'with me' alone" δεῦτε ὑμεῖς αὐτοὶ κατ᾽ ἰδίαν). However, Jesus sends them away before he can pray (v. 46). The result is that again the disciples are left out of Jesus' piety, emphasising his uniqueness. However, this very construction addresses the audience who is not left out but follow Jesus to the place of prayer. From their vantage point, knowing the end of the story, Jesus can be seen alone before God. In this the text functions as a Christological revelation of the Father-Son communion to the audience. However, the words of Jesus' prayers are not recounted. At this stage the audience is placed in a position of wanting to have that gap filled, in a build-up to the scene in 14:32–42. Indirectly the scene also provides an ideal in so far as Jesus' continued communion with God is a type of the audience's relationship with God. They are to "keep awake and pray" (14:38).

7:32–35 Healing of a Deaf and Dumb Man

Before healing the deaf man with a speaking impediment Jesus looks to heaven and sighs. The gaze to heaven is similar to that used in the feeding miracle in 6:46 (verbatim ἀναβλέψας εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν). Just as in that earlier passage the act should be understood to refer to prayer. The gaze stands in parallel to the sigh which should be understood in the same manner (cf. Rom 8:22–27). Jesus has repeatedly been shown to perform acts proper to God. In that sense there is no need to include God in the scene through an 'inhalation' of superhuman power.[34] Jesus continually, and on his own initiative, performs acts proper to God.

The command "be opened" (διανοίχθητι) could be interpreted as a circumlocutory prayer to God, or as a reflexive command to the deaf man or his mouth. In general the Marcan language of prayer is more indirect than in the other Synoptics (see the Gethsemane scene and the cry from the cross). Still, Jesus is associated closely with God. This, however, seems to be done in other ways than through an intimate prayer-language. The look to heaven, and the sigh, should be understood as a reference a continued communion with God. God acts in Jesus in a direct way, to the extent that Jesus can command evil with the same authority as his Father.

The way the power is administered or even transferred through prayer preceded by touching of the sick shows the integrated worldview of Mark.

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[34] Gnilka points to a number of such parallels to the practices of miracle workers. Gnilka 1978, 297.

The particular course of action draws on characterisation appropriate to an 'exorcist.'[35] The procedure can be read as references to a contemporary mode of medical action.[36] The physical acts of Jesus are presented as part of what instigates the miracle. Mark is the only Gospel which uses such coarse language in describing the connection between the 'physical' and divine spheres. The physical world is not excluded from the direct agency of God. This is above all the case with Jesus, his primary agent. At the same time Jesus' followers seem to be implied in this dynamic as well. When they follow him they will be able to perform similar acts. In 6:7–13 the disciples were called to cast out demons and are partly successful in this task. It has actually been suggested that this healing-scene is a paradigmatic instruction for healers.[37] In prayer the disciples unleash God's power in the human sphere (as shown by 9:29). This is not a question of an analogous relationship. Jesus' relation to the Father is not a straight example for the disciples. Jesus' character is intermingled with that of his Father in a way that neither the disciples nor audience are. However, through association with Jesus the implied audience can benefit from his power (more on this below, especially in the section 'Prayer to Jesus?').

9:14–29 Healing of a Demoniac Boy and Teaching on Prayer

This miracle scene contains a number of points central to the Marcan picture of prayer. From the mount of transfiguration Jesus descends to a controversy between the scribes and his disciples. Luke on his part includes prayer at the ascension and heart of the transfiguration scene, as a proper place of revelation. After it Luke presents the confession of Jesus as Messiah. In Mark, the revelation of the transfiguration continues with a further note on the disciples' incomprehension. They cannot heal the demoniac boy, but are called to prayer. This difference points to Mark's different development of Christology, and also the theme of prayer. That the Marcan scene contributes to the Christology is shown in the amazement that the arrival of his person stirs up in "the whole crowd" (v. 15). Jesus is set apart from all of them, a point also made in v. 19 when Jesus seems to distance himself from all others ("you faithless generation"). As part of this Christological picture Mark develops proper

[35] Marcus 2000, 478.

[36] Some see the gaze and sigh as magical thaumaturgic gestures common in pagan healings. For the gaze cf. Pesch 1977, 396. For the sigh cf. Dibelius 1971, 85–86.

[37] See Nineham 1963, 204.

ways to respond to Jesus through the other characters. One part of this response is concerned with prayer.

The way Jesus interacts with the father of the sick boy speaks to the audience through the use of irony. In v. 22 the father approaches Jesus to ask if he is able to heal, and asks for pity on his son and himself. Such a request could appropriately be addressed to a contemporary physician, or healer.[38] The audience of course knows the answer, and has been alerted already in the amazement which accompanied Jesus' introduction into the scene. After this the picture gets more complex. Jesus responds in an ambiguous statement on the ability of "he who believes." It is not clear whether "he who believes" is meant to refer to Jesus' own faith, or the faith of the father. The father takes the latter option and asks for his unbelief to be helped. In this case, it is an example of belief and unbelief both related to prayer. It is not clear whether this petition is directed at God or at Jesus. Probably the ambiguity is deliberate. Jesus has been shown to forgive sins and heal (leading other characters to praise God, 2:5–12). On all accounts it is clear that it is Jesus who answers the call for help. A prayer to Jesus is not explicit, but an answer from Jesus is.

The power of Jesus is highlighted in this scene. Meeting Jesus, the father realises and recognises his lack of faith and thereby provides an example for the audience. Jesus' rebuke of unbelief includes all present, disciples, scribes and the father. Yet, this situation is helped once a prayer to amend this defect is produced. The response of faith is enacted in direct interaction with God (through his agent Jesus). The only requirement in this scene is the recognition of a lack of faith. The result is an emphasis on human incapability and divine saving capability. The character of the "father" presents a realistic picture of humanity, 'believing' and 'unbelieving' at the same time. Faith is not an inherent capacity but is a gift. This is significant as faith is so closely connected with prayer (cf. especially 11:12–25).

Jesus' powerful acts are followed by instruction which explains to the disciples why they were not able to perform the exorcism. In one sense, Jesus is an ideal character in this passage as a figure who believes. However, only indirectly can he be thought of as a type. Through his unique faith he is set apart from all other characters. The faith he speaks of is ideal, but for his followers it does not come naturally. It is rather asked for and given. This also means that the disciples appear in a better light; Jesus

[38] Jesus was an 'exorcist.' So Achtemeier 1975, 491.

is alone in his capacity and communion with the Father. At the same time he is also the character which opens the relation to the Father for the other characters, through his own person. When they petition him they are helped.

In this context, the call to pray must be thought of as an instruction for the disciples, not a straightforward description of Jesus' approach. In one sense Jesus is portrayed as always in communion with God. Yet this is a communion which is not presented as analogous to that between his followers and God. They approach God, or come in contact with God, primarily through Jesus. When they follow Jesus they share in his relation to God. Yet it is Jesus with whom they have a relation. The borders between Jesus and God the Father are somewhat blurred when it comes to agency.

The disciples have already been called to follow Jesus and continue his ministry of exorcism, which they do (6:7–13). The early success the disciples experienced can be continued, but only in prayer (v. 29).[39] The incompetence of the disciples in this exorcism sets the stage for an explicit teaching on discipleship. Jesus takes the disciples aside and withdraws to a house to provide further explanation as is done repeatedly in Mark (4:10; 7:17; 9:28; 10:10). The form of exorcism called for here can only be performed in prayer. This prayer is, as is later argued, an expression of faith. The lack of prayer on the part of the disciples was a lack of faith (v. 19, 23). Later Mark further maintains that prayer is directed to God, and connected to faith (11:22). Verses 9:14–29 imply that God's primary agent is to be included in that faith. This aspect is above all communicated implicitly to the audience, who sees that Jesus is God's agent who responds to petitions for help. Hence, Jesus is an example of faith, but implicitly he is also a recipient of the faith of his followers.

11:12–25 Prophetic Acts and Teaching on Prayer

Verses 12–25 are placed between presentations of Jesus' identity and authority (vv. 1–10 and 27–33; cf. 1:27). The scene comes as the conflict between Jesus and the religious establishment increases, establishing Jesus' authority. Mark often underlines Jesus' critique of Jewish authorities

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[39] Most manuscripts add "and fasting" after "prayer" in 9:29. However, the witnesses for its omission are superior (ℵ*, B, *k*, geo[1], Clement). References to fasting are also added in Acts 10:30; 1 Cor 7:5. It seems like the addition stems from an increased interest in asceticism in the early church as evidenced by Acts 13:2; 14:23; *Didache* 7 and 8; Justin *1 Apol.* 61.

(3:22; 4:12; 7:1–23; 12:13–17; 13:2; 14:49).[40] Only one miracle is recounted in Jerusalem, a negative one (a *Strafwunder*, cf. 6:5). The scenes of the Temple cleansing and cursing of the fig tree are intertwined so as to be mutually interpretative of each other. Verses 22–25 with their teaching on prayer comments and concludes these scenes, showing Jesus as an authoritative teacher. They also draw borders around the community of his followers. The earlier combination of prayer with faith, and also miracles, is continued. Together with the added material on forgiveness and God's fatherhood the passage makes up the most substantial section on prayer in Mark. I will proceed with a consideration of Jesus' symbolical acts, followed by a discussion of the explicit teaching.

The miracle of the fig tree continues the picture of Jesus as a powerful character. Now this power and authority are also directed against the Temple.[41] A number of observations suggest that a symbolical interpretation is required of verse 13. Jesus was looking for figs, yet Mark explicitly states that it was not the season for figs. Jesus had just experienced the hospitality of his friends in Bethany, yet was hungry. He speaks to a tree as to a person (v. 14 καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν αὐτῇ). His cleansing would only involve a minor disruption to a large market serving thousands of Passover pilgrims.[42] The result is that the acts can be compared to riddles performed by OT prophets (cf. Is 20:1–6; Jer 13:1–11; 19:1–13; Ez 4:1–15). The conclusion to the scene comes in v. 19 when the disciples pass by the tree again, this time it is "withered from the root" (v. 19). Read together, the two scenes contrast Jesus and a Temple void of divine authority.[43]

The acts in the Temple should be read as an act of judgment. It displays Jesus concern for the sanctity of the Temple.[44] Whether it is a judgment of the Temple as such, or an aspect or custom connected to it is not altogether clear.[45] In the context of a discussion of Jesus' authority the scenes must be read as pertaining primarily to the Christology. Discussions of the Temple are included since such are necessary in presentations of who Jesus is. Jesus is presented as a prophetic teacher who criticises the religious

[40] Cf. Gnilka 1978, 29.

[41] Some have argued that the destruction of the fig tree implies the destruction of the Temple: Donahue 1973, 114; Juel 1977, 127. However, within a covenant judgment does not necessarily spell destruction, rather the opposite.

[42] For cleansing the Temple cf. 2 Kgs 23; 1 Macc 4:36–59.

[43] Kelber 1979, 60f; Telford 1980, 93, 103, 261; Watty 1983, 235–239.

[44] Chilton 1997, 64.

[45] Sanders argues that the destruction and rebuilding of the Temple was part of contemporary Jewish expectations. Sanders 1985, 77–90.

life of Israel, here especially activities in the Temple (cf. the quote of Jer 7:11).[46] Verse 18 suggests that it is primarily the chief priests and scribes who are judged. The irony in the presentation of the religious leaders is evident and helps create an insider group following Jesus. Through this, Mark not only criticises the functions of the Temple, rather, the Temple metaphors are used directly in the Christology (14:53–64; 15:29, 38. cf. also 1 Cor 3:16–17; 12:27).

In the description of what the Temple should be Jesus does not explicitly mention the sacrifices as could be expected.[47] Rather he emphasises that the Temple should be a house of prayer. Surely the Temple sacrifice can be understood as a form of prayer, but here prayer as such is abstracted from the praxis of the Temple. This is what allows for the later argument on the community of Jesus' followers functioning as the Temple.[48] Differing from Matthew, "for all nations" is included in Mark's quote from Isaiah (Is 56:7). If the buying and selling took place in the court of the Gentiles it could not be used by them as a place of prayer. The resulting picture is one in which Jesus is above all concerned with prayer as the *sine qua non* of the Temple. This emphasis is continued in the concluding teaching which also majors on prayer (22–25). Mark has already presented prayer as the sign of faith, and this line of thinking is continued here (cf. 9:14–29). The result must be that the absence of prayer in the Temple implies an absence of faith.[49] In this light the emphasis on faith, and Jesus as an ultimate character of faith, becomes clearer. It is Jesus who embodies the ideals of the Temple. His followers can heed his call to "have faith in God" (v. 22), unlike the establishment surrounding the Temple.[50] The audience can do this when it follows and trusts in him; he helps their unbelief (9:24).

The result of the symbolical scenes is that it is the community of Jesus' followers at prayer who embody the ideal of the Temple.[51] When they follow Jesus' teaching, they can pray as they should. In this the symbolical scenes speak both of the demise of the Temple, and at the same time

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[46] For complaints of Temple corruption preceding and contemporary to the time of Jesus see Mal 3:3; Pss Sol 2:3–5; 8:11–13; 1 Qp Hab 8:8–13; 12:1–10; CD 5:6–8; 6:12–17.

[47] Ådna 2000, 412.

[48] The notion of "Sacrifice," inseparable from the Temple, is certainly also a part of the Christology.

[49] Evans 2001, 192.

[50] θεοῦ should be read in v. 22 although a few manuscripts omit it cf. 10:27; 14:36.

[51] The prayer teaching constitutes the new community: Donahue 1973, 103–138; Juel 1977, 145–209.

of the reality of a new community.[52] Jesus' teaching on prayer therefore sets in relief the community of his followers. In the OT, Israel is seen as a fig tree, and judgment will involve the destruction of fig trees, alternately Israel is judged because it is fruitless (cf. Jer 8:13; Hos 2:12; 9:10, 16; Joel 1:7; Mic 7:1–6). It is the last metaphor which takes precedence in this scene.

The Temple is presented as a fruitless fig tree, more so than in the other Synoptics. On such an account Mark presents prayer as the true way to be fruitful.[53] Yet, praying in the right manner is not simply an ethical question. It is in part dependent on the gift of faith (9:14–29), and the power and authority of him who is shown to answer prayers. A mix of images occurs in the use of Temple imagery in the Christology, and in the image of the community of Jesus' followers fulfilling its ideals. In this way Jesus followers are implicitly associated directly with his person. However, exactly what form of association is envisaged is not spelled out (as in John). Mark presents that which is known to the audience as a 'secret.'

The two scenes of the fig tree and the Temple-cleansing are rounded off by the major saying of Jesus in these passages, "Have faith in God" (v. 22). This saying is developed in the following sayings on "moving mountains," and praying for "whatever" (πάντὰ ὅσα προσεύχεσθε καὶ αἰτεῖσθε).[54] From symbolical acts, Mark moves on to symbolical sayings.[55] The saying continues in the bold style found earlier in the narrative with the coupling of prayer and miracles. The moving of mountains should probably be understood as a reference to eschatological salvation (Is 40:3–5; 45:2; 49:11; Zech 14:4–5). This salvation is available to the followers of Jesus who have faith and accept God's power and agency (1:15).[56] The section can at first sight appear rather mechanical. The follower of Jesus is to speak directly to the mountain and move it, on the basis of unwavering faith.[57] Faith could here be understood as a possession which enables the pray-er to act in

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[52] As argued independently by Echols Dowd 1988, 55; Marshall 1989, 172.

[53] Fruitfulness is coupled to prayer in both Mark and John cf. Jn 14:13–14, 16; 15:1–16.

[54] The saying could be a further judgment of the Temple ("this" mountain v. 23) thrown into the sea, (5:13; 9:42). However, such a conclusion is unwarranted. Zech 14:4 speaks of the destruction of the Mount of Olives. In any case the focus is on the teaching of Jesus, and the saying is used as an illustrative example (as 10:25).

[55] Mark here uses imaginative language which forces a reinterpretation of the world. So Tannehill 1975, 27.

[56] Echols Dowd 1988, 94.

[57] Some see the piety of the passage as "dangerous." So Haenchen 1966, 391; Schmid 1968, 212. Some exclude the passage in works where it would make an obvious difference. So Marxsen 1969; Weeden 1971. For the neglect of 11:20–25 in Marcan Scolarship see Echols Dowd 1988, 6.

powerful ways. However, the end of the utterance precludes such a reading. The faith in question will lead to the mighty acts being done *for* him. The two options are "it will be done for him," "he (God) will do it for him" (ἔσται fut. 3. pers, αὐτῷ dat). The faith in question is faith *in* God (πίστιν θεοῦ objective genitive v. 22). The result is that the pray-er participates in work that in the OT was clearly God's (Cf. Ex 19:18; Job 9:5; Pss 68:8; 90:2; 97:5; 114:4–7; 144:5; Jer 4:24; Nah 1:5).[58] In Mark, Jesus does this in an unqualified manner; the text calls his followers to do it by association with him.

The set of symbolical acts and sayings are concluded by some explicit teaching on prayer (v. 24 διὰ τοῦτο λέγω ὑμῖν). Thereby the central call to "have faith in God" is connected directly to prayer. Bruce Marshall is right in arguing on this passage that "Mark conceives of faith then not simply as the basis for entry to the new community, but as its continuing *modus operandi.*"[59] The mountain-moving saying of v. 23 must be read to the effect that prayer is the expression of faith.[60] Again there is instruction on how to exercise the power of God (cf. 3:14–15; 4:40; 9:23).[61] Prayer is not the expression of an inner state which is externalised. Prayer is an expression of faith as a continual commitment, faithfulness and dependence on the relationship to God. The true follower of Jesus is constituted by faith. Yet that faith is not presented as an inherent quality, it is a relational act. Prayer takes a central role in this 'act of faith.'[62] Mark does not have as much prayer-material as the other Gospels, yet what is there is absolutely central. Prayer and faith, in one breath, are central in the relationship Jesus' followers have to God.

Besides 'faith', a second ideal is presented in this prayer-teaching; that is 'forgiveness' (also found in Mt 6:12, 14; Lk 11:4 par). Just as forgiveness was a central element of the sacrificial system of the Temple, so forgiveness is a central element in the form of prayer which comes to take the place of the Temple. This also brings in the 'other' into the dialogue between God and the pray-er. In forgiving, the pray-er is imitating the character of

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[58] So Marshall 1989, 167. Mk 16:20 provides an interesting interpretation in the use of συνεργοῦντος.

[59] Marshall 1989, 165.

[60] For discussion see Telford 1980, 95–119; Evans 2001, 189. It is often seen as a logion close to the historical Jesus. So Ebeling 1963 229f; Lührmann 1976, 18; Telford 1980, 118.

[61] Yarbro Collins 2007, 534–535.

[62] A strong connection between faith and prayer is argued by Schreiber 1967, 241; Lührmann 1976, 19.

God (2:3–17). The scope of this forgiveness is all-inclusive (v. 25 ἀφίετε εἴ τι ἔχετε κατά τινος). Somehow the divine and human acts are not easy to separate, the pray-er must forgive "so that"/"in order that" (ἵνα καὶ) they will be forgiven.[63] The forgiving character of God is here made a template for human action (as in Mt 5:44; 6:9–15).

As Mark concludes the teaching on prayer, he refers to "your Father in heaven" (v. 25 ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς). This exact phrase is also used by Matthew in connection with prayer material.[64] In Mark, and the other Gospels, it is in prayer that God can be experienced as Father.[65] The prayer envisaged is based on a continuous relationship to God as Father (v. 25 προσευχόμενοι pres ptc). The pray-er is envisaged as a child of God. Only Jesus is the Son of the Father, but his followers are commanded to address him like Jesus does (14:36). Not that the relationships could in any sense be seen as analogous; the uniqueness of Mark's Jesus rules that out. However, Jesus' revelation and saving acts (especially 10:45) enable a new relationship to the Father. Central in this relationship is the prayer to the Father described in this section.[66]

12:40 Long Prayers for Appearance

The saying in 12:40 adds to Mark's negative characterisation of the scribes. Here Jesus gives a warning against their practice, part of which includes prayer. In passing, it can be noted that the teaching takes place in the Temple (vv. 35 and 41).[67] The negative picture also implies that its opposite is ideal. From the immediate context it can be gathered that some scribes displayed their piety to gain status (Lk 18:11–12 uses similar material to that found here, see also Mt 6:7). Their prayers were said with the human listeners in mind, in order to impress them. To this negative form of piety Jesus assigns a "greater condemnation" (περισσότερον κρίμα). The effect is to cement the emphasis on prayer and faith. To Mark, prayer is

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[63] Verse 26 is not found in the best manuscripts. It is a clarification of the reciprocity between the divine and human acts.

[64] One senses here an underlying liturgical language. Mt 5:45; 6:9; 7:11; 18:14. Cf. also 23:9.

[65] On vv. 24–25: "Da der Evangelist das Sohnesprädikat favorisiert, darf die Eröffnung des Vatergedankens als Einbeziehung in das Sohnesverhältnis Jesu gesehen werden." Gnilka 1979, 135.

[66] So Mann 1986, 453.

[67] This leads Mann to again stress "the contrast between prayer and the Temple cult which seems to underlie so much of Mark." Mann 1986, 493.

directed at God. Moreover, it is also primarily communication between God and the pray-er as an individual (cf. Mt 6:6).

13:18 Prayer in the Eschatological Discourse

Mark's eschatological speech is similar to that in Mt 24–25 but somewhat shorter. The saying on prayer is to be interpreted like that in Matthew (cf. the exegesis of Mt 24:20).[68] Eschatological events are at hand, and will present themselves very tangibly to the audience. Prayer should probably not be seen as a direct influence on eschatological events which are already in the hand of God. Knowing what will happen, God has already "shortened" the days on account of the elect (v. 20). However, prayer is still, in a general sense, an appropriate response to the hardship described.

Prayer to Jesus?

Throughout the narrative, various characters approach Jesus to ask for his help. As already noted, it is not always clear whether these petitions are directed to Jesus or to God. When Jesus is asked to perform this or the other deed, the request could be read as an appeal to his known ability as a miracle worker. Verse 4:38 on the stilling of the storm is sometimes adduced as an example of prayer directed to Jesus. Yet, the language used is not explicit. The disciples wake Jesus up and say to him "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing." Now this fits seamlessly into the story. The disciples do not 'cry out' to him. Neither do they use the much more explicit prayer-language found in Matthew (Mt 8:25).[69] The disciples are afraid afterwards, suggesting that they did not intend to pray to him. They are ignorant of the true identity of Jesus, even after the miracle. In Mark there are no explicit presentations of Jesus' exalted status within the text as such, as is the case in Matthew, Luke and John (cf. Mt 28:17; Lk 24:52).

At the same time there is in Mark a consistent picture of people approaching Jesus to get help. When they do this they are indeed helped, even to the extent of being forgiven of sins (2:5) and given faith (9:24). At times Jesus is also approached with what could be taken as devotion. In

[68] The absence of this specific prayer reference in Luke is remarkable. See though Luke's repeated use of a saying similar to Mk 13:33.

[69] Mark does not use the same explicit psalmic language in these petitions as Matthew. Still the general form and content can be thought to be basically psalmic. Glöckner 1983.

10:17 Jesus rebukes a man who knelt before him. The rebuke concerns the words he says not the kneeling which might imply that he accepted such a show of reverence (cf. also 7:28). However, Jesus explicitly teaches that faith is to be directed to God (11:22). This is complicated by the fact that it appears as if it is often Jesus who answers the needs of other characters. This sets Jesus out as God's agent. At the same time he seems to be acting on his own accord, apparently he does not need to pray to perform miracles. In healing and exorcisms he merely commands the disease or demon to leave. His prayers of communion are not equal to the prayers of his followers, like his relation to God is not equal to theirs. Jesus prays alone, never with the disciples. The net result for the audience seems to be that the prayers to God appear to be answered by Jesus. There is on this particular account an interweaving of the characters of Jesus the Son and God the Father.

The discussion of prayer to Jesus is complicated as there are no explicit cases of it, yet a good number of implicit ones. For the audience it is clear that the "Lord" approached by the Syro-Phoenician woman (7:28) is none other than the "Lord" Jesus Christ, the Son of God (1:1–3, 10). That this is not clear to the characters of the narrative is due to Mark's literary strategy. The use of irony is clear in such passages as 5:6 and 15:19. In what appears as the voice of a demon-possessed and the insults of the Roman soldiers the audience recognises the true nature of Jesus. He *is* exalted. Yet this is kept hidden, or even 'secret,' throughout the narrative. The same is true for the petitions directed to Jesus. They indicate to the audience where help is to be found. The explicit teaching on prayer indicates that God is the one to be approached in prayer. However, his answer comes through his Son who is his offer of salvation.

Narrative Progression: Ministry Narrative

The first part of Mark's narrative gives a picture of Jesus as a pray-er. Prayer is used to develop the Christology both in the presentation of his private communion with God, and in the implicit development of a devotion to his person. For the disciples and the audience, prayer is a way to follow Jesus in his ministry. When they pray, they too can be successful in the battle against evil (6:7; 9:29). In the ministry narrative, the successful victory over the forces of evil, through exorcisms and healings, is emphasised. In the majority of cases, Jesus acts with authority without conferring with the Father for each specific case. At two instances, there are indications of a prayer preceding such acts (6:41; 7:32–35). The later procedure

is the norm for the disciples. To them prayer is a tool in the battle against evil, and not only that, to follow Jesus is to display faith and relate to God his Father. Both of these aspects are developed in connection to prayer.

Mark relies heavily on irony in his construction of an ideal prayer. Throughout, Jesus is separated from other characters, including the disciples and the twelve. The Temple does not fulfill its intended function. In contrast, the audience is led along from a privileged vantage point. They know Jesus and are his insiders. In this role they also follow Jesus where the other characters do not go, to his place of prayer. To them, Jesus functions both as a unique saviour and as a type. However, the progress of the narrative does not show any progress on the part of the disciples. For all characters, even the audience, the main progress is between the ministry narrative and the passion narrative.

Passion Narrative 14:1–16:8

The ministry narrative with its power and victories is qualified by the narrative of the passion. In Mark there is a more marked tension between the two main sections than in the other Gospels. The contrast results in a realistic picture of discipleship as an existence which includes experiencing God's power and victory over evil, as well as suffering and sacrifice. Best has read Mark's shift in focus from the miracles to the cross as an encouragement to the Marcan community to continue in their progress towards the resurrection.[70] The cross, and the way it presents the human predicament and its solution, is central in biblical anthropology.

14:22–23 Last Supper

As noted in the exegesis of the food miracles, the language of the Last Supper is paralleled in common Jewish meal practice. At the level of the narrative, the blessings (v. 22) are what can properly be called prayers. Again Jesus should be seen as following proper Jewish customs, here at the Passover meal (vv. 12, 16).[71] After the meal he sings the *Hallel* (v. 26 ὑμνήσαντες, actually the second half, Pss 116–118) which according to the

[70] Best 1986, 195–196. This pastoral argument is preferred over a corrective Christology that argues against the earlier part of the Gospel (as Weeden does). Weeden 1971.

[71] The Lucan/Pauline reference to the cup "after the meal" probably corresponds to Jewish praxis.

Mishna was customary at the festival.[72] Jesus introduces a new meaning to the bread and cup, an interpretation of his death. To Mark Jesus' death is to be understood in the light of the paschal sacrifice. The reference to the cup (v. 23 ποτήριον) brings to mind the scene in 10:38–39 where James and John will share his cup (of suffering) and at the same time points forward to the prayer of Gethsemane (14:36). Here, the main level of communication is implicit. To the implied audience, the scene can only be understood in light of their contemporary religious praxis.

14:32–42 Jesus Alone at Prayer III—Gethsemane

The Gethsemane scene sets the stage for the final part of Mark's narrative, as yet another interpretation of the death of Jesus from within the narrative (cf. 8:31; 10:32, 45; 14:22–23, 27). It appears as a necessary step on the road to the defining act of the narrative, the cross.[73] Here Jesus pursues the will of God, working salvation (8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34, 45; 14:24). The scene is primarily used to develop the Christology. Still, it also contributes to the construction of an ideal pray-er. This is the third and last scene portraying Jesus at prayer. In the previous two prayer scenes (1:35 and 6:46), there were no indications of what was prayed, nor any mention of explicit results. Such a reticent development of the character of Jesus creates a narrative expectation to fill in the gaps created by the story.[74] In Gethsemane this expectation is met in a scene which is the only elaborated picture of Jesus at prayer in Mark. It is the only account of Jesus' important prayer-life and as such carries much weight in the narrative. Here, as in the earlier sections on prayer, there is an integration of the prayers of Jesus and those of his followers. The exemplary function of the scene is heightened with the inclusion of some explicit prayer-teaching.

This scene qualifies the picture of Jesus found in the ministry narrative. There he was powerful and acted with authority. Here the picture is different. The language used to characterise Jesus is coarser than in the other Synoptics, especially compared to Luke. Jesus is "greatly distressed" (ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι). "Deeply troubled" (ἀδημονεῖν) and "grieved to the point of death" (περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχή μου ἕως θανάτου also used by Mt). The mention of how Jesus falls to the ground further paints a scene of desperation. This prayer of Jesus is quite different from the teaching he gave his

[72] Bradshaw 2002, 38.
[73] Senior 1984.
[74] So Fowler 1991, 215.

disciples in 11:20–25. However, Jesus is not portrayed as losing control of the situation. He announces the arrival of the betrayer, not the disciples set to keep watch. The handing over of the Son of Man is, as argued, God's will (cf. vv. 36, 41). Still, the tone implies that what lies ahead is a genuine sacrifice.

In Gethsemane, Mark uses the disciples to lead the audience to associate with Jesus. Although the disciples are called to "sit" with Jesus (v. 32) and Peter, James and John were called to "watch" (v. 34), they fail three times. Their "closed eyes" (v. 40) symbolise their spiritual blindness at a crucial moment of the narrative. In contrast, the audience overhears Jesus' petitions and observes him in his battle.[75] The use of cross-imagery in sections on discipleship suggests that the scene is partly to be read as an example for the audience (cf. 8:34–35). Jesus is the one who believes (9:23), and is here faithful in the face of death (cf. also Mt 24:45; Lk 16:13). He serves with his life, and calls his disciples to follow (10:44–45). After this scene of prayer, he is no longer the active character of the narrative but is acted upon. To Mark this is the place where Jesus gives his life into the hands of God.

Jesus' call for a different mode of action on God's part draws on a psalmic piety, especially that of lamentation (cf. Ps 30:8–10; 40:11–13; 42:9–11; 43:1–2, 5; 55:4–8; 61:1–3; 116:3–4).[76] Both the prayer language of Jesus and the implicit petitions to Jesus throughout the narrative use psalmic language. Mark like Matthew uses the term "grieved" (v. 34 περίλυπος), which is also found in Psalms 41:6, 12 and 43:5. In form, a lament is not restrained, controlled and polite but immediate and complaining.[77] In great distress, Jesus asks God to let the hour pass from him (v. 35) and that the cup be "taken away" (v. 36).[78] The result is that the prayer comes across as a true dialogue. Jesus communes, dialogues and complains to God.

The use of the prayer-address *Abba* displays the sonship of Jesus (v. 36; cf. 1:11; 9:7).[79] The use of the term sets Jesus out in his religious

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[75] "The narratee is turned into the narrative's only insider; all others are revealed to be outsiders." Fowler 1991, 219.

[76] Johnson notes that this prayer of Jesus "follows the pattern of the Jewish synagogue prayers such as the *Berakah Yozer*." Johnson 1991, 169.

[77] Cf. Miller 1983, 32–45.

[78] The Early Church came to defend two wills present in Jesus in this scene. George 1953, 46.

[79] This passage is often made the basis of historical arguments concerning Jesus' prayer-teaching. Taylor 1966, 551; Barbour 1969–70, 234f; Dunn 1975, 17, 21. For historical considerations cf. Jeremias 1967, 57, 81; Marchel 1971, 21–97. Jeremias argued for the uniqueness of the term in Palestinian Judaism. Jeremias 1967, 29. For references to the fatherhood of

surrounding.[80] That the followers of Jesus should address God by this name is not immediately obvious in Mark. Jesus is unique, and he alone is the Son of God (cf. the incipit and inclusio in 1:11 and 15:39).[81] This prayer-text shows that Jesus is unique since his relation to God is unique. Yet, it is in the prayer-teaching that Jesus directs the disciples to God as "Father" (11:25). That the early community did address God as "*Abba*" is beyond doubt as Paul shows by using the transliteration in Rom 8:15 and Gal 4:6.[82] This is also done in the other Synoptics with their explicit prayer-teaching (Mt 6:9–13 and Lk 11:2–4). It is in prayer that the followers of Jesus can call God "Father." The audience is called to accept the "beloved son" (9:7; 12:6), not reject him like the evil servants (13:33–37). In accepting him they share in his prior relation to God.[83] The controlling image used to describe the results of Jesus' salvific acts is that of being a child of God, the Father.

In addition to the development of the character of Jesus, the scene also speaks to the audience and directs its prayers. It contributes to an ideal pray-er both in the type provided by Jesus and in direct teaching. The inclusion of direct teaching in the scene is part of what suggests that it is to be seen as a type for the audience. The prayer for God's will to happen would be fitting for them to pray as well (v. 36).[84] This is especially so if they are to avoid the pitfalls that the disciples continuously fall into. They know that Jesus must suffer this, and also that the cross is a symbol of discipleship in Mark. Prayer for the will of God to happen can be thought to make the pray-er a conscious agent in God's plan.[85] It is not

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God cf. Ex 4:22; Deut 32:6; Is 63:16; Ps 89:26; Hos 11:1; Wis 14:3; Tob 13:4; Sir 23:1, 4; 51:10; 3 Macc 6:3, 8; m. Ta'an. 3:8. In the OT 'Father' is a salvation historical term that displays an apocalyptic hope. So Zeller 1981, 118–119.

[80] Jeremias argued that it was an intimate family word. Jeremias 1967, 57–62. In English he prefers "dear Father" and not "Daddy." Cf. Jeremias 1965, 19–20, 30. For convincing qualifications of his argument cf. Vermes 1983, 39–43; Barr 1988, 28–47; Mawhinney 1988, 181–189; Meyer 1991. Cf. further arguments that *Abba* is never used as an address of God without suffix or other additions. Charlesworth 1994; Marchel 1971, 110–111. Fitzmyer points to the use in 4Q372 1:16 (*abbi*), 4Q460 5:6 (*abbi*). Fitzmyer 1993, 53. Chilton has displayed the use of 'Father' as a name for God in the Targumim, and Non-canonical Literatures of Judaism and Christianity. Chilton 1993, 151–169.

[81] Jesus experienced an intimate relation of sonship in prayer. Dunn 1975, 26.

[82] Paul develops it in the direction of inheritance. Cf. Stendahl 1995, 14.

[83] "The disciples participated in Jesus' sonship through prayer in a way that unites christology, soteriology and spiritiuality." Dunn 1992, 619.

[84] Lane suggests that the Our Father lies behind the teaching in vv. 36–41. Lane 1974, 521. Cf. also Mt 6:10.

[85] The human participation sets this concept of God's will apart from Stoic thinking which represents a more fatalistic system. Cf. Arrian *Epict. diss.* 3:22:95: "If it please the gods, so be it."

the execution of a power possessed by the pray-er, as could be implied by a cursory reading of the earlier prayer teaching. Prayer is thought to bring God's power to act upon the concerns of the pray-er. However, the construction is complex as it is God who is thought to bring about the "adverse" situation in the first place. A probable solution is that prayer is to be understood as an expression of complete obedience; trust that through God's power, the end will be to the advantage of the pray-er.

The scene also includes some explicit teaching directed at the disciples. The call to "watch and pray" applies to the disciples within the narrative, and to the audience at the same time. The disciples should not be sleeping but should stay awake with Jesus—for *their* sake (v. 38). However, this they have already failed to do (v. 37), and fail again (40, 41). They do not understand Jesus, they do not pray, and they later deny him. Despite this Jesus dies for them, which could be seen as a way of instilling hope in the audience. The saying repeats the similar call concluding the preceding eschatological discourse in 13:33–37. The same verbs are used to describe how both the householder and Jesus "come" (ἔρχεται) and "find" (εὑρίσκει) their people "sleeping" (καθεύδεις).[86] In the eschatological discourse of ch. 13 it is spoken in the face of the returning head of the house. Prayer is the sure way to stay awake and be prepared at his (second) coming. The prayer of this section is a fitting response to the adverse circumstances described in chapter 13. In this saying the perspective of the early narrative with its focus on the presence of the power of the kingdom is qualified by a future eschatology.

The last part of the explicit teaching is a direct anthropological statement on the "spirit" and the "flesh" (cf. the exegesis of Mt 26:41). It should not be read as a soul/body distinction but one which refers to basic orientations. In the LXX the terms sometimes appear in tandem as in Ps 77:39 and Ez 21:12. In those passages they are parallel and both point to human weakness before God. In Num 27:16, the terms both point to dependence on God. However, in Mark the terms stand in opposition to each other. An opposition is also found in Is 31:3 where the flesh is powerless and stands in opposition to "spirit" which by implication has power. In Isaiah it is the Spirit of God who is powerful in opposition to the Egyptian horses. However, in Mark the saying seems to refer to two "faculties" within man. In Rom 8:1–17 being "spiritual" is a result of the resurrection and the

[86] Here the just mentioned references to Matthew on "faithfulness" come to mind as they are found in the parable on the faithful servants.

outpouring of the spirit (v. 11). This Pauline example might provide the better analogy.[87] Actually it is also in this same discussion that Paul transcribes an *Abba* cry (suggesting that the tradition used by the authors is similar at this point). Both within the scene and throughout Mark it seems like the disciples are not acting according to the Spirit. In Gethsemane they sleep. If they acted according to the Spirit/spirit they would be praying. Throughout Mark they do not understand and do not know how to respond to Jesus (9:6; 14:44). On this account, the flesh acts as a human capacity that is open to temptation. Again it is worth repeating the fact that this sets up a situation in which the audience can act rightly. After the passion they can be called by Jesus to live according to the spirit, pray, and escape temptation.

15:34 Last Words of Jesus

The language of Mark's crucifixion scene is terse but evocative. Although the whole narrative has built up to this point, the crucifixion is described briefly (cf. v. 24 καὶ σταυροῦσιν αὐτὸν). The Marcan last words of Jesus do nothing to alleviate the tension of Jesus facing death (like Lk or Jn could be said to do). At the lips of Jesus are found words from a psalm of lament (Ps 22:1). At this point Jesus does not use the Gethsemane address "Abba" but "my God" (ελωι translated as ὁ θεός μου). The words themselves are recounted in Aramaic, suggesting their importance by being carried over in transliteration.[88] Even at the cross Jesus is characterised in relation to God, but here as left by him. In a paradox, the "Son of God" is abandoned by God the Father. The Gethsemane scene must be thought of as an explanation of how the Son of God who acts with authority (ἐξουσία) dies in weakness. It was God's will, and in prayer also his own. Jesus' relation to God includes sacrifice.

The presence of a petition in this scene is paradoxical. Within the narrative the utterance is not transparent as Jesus has predicted his death *and* resurrection three times (8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34). He has willingly accepted and pursued God's will which includes this very end. In the light of Jesus' assertive exercise of power in the earlier part of the narrative, this comes across as a sacrifice and acceptance of a different role (cf. Phil 2:6–11). The

[87] Paul's anthropology and use of the term is much more developed than this. In addition to the OT uses of flesh to denote the body, it is also what is bound up with this world. Rom 7:14; 1 Cor 3:3.

[88] D and Θ use a transliteration of a Hebrew cry: ηλι.

use of a psalm at the cross continues the psalmic language used in all the prayer material of Mark, be it Jesus or others praying. The expressed quote of a traditional prayer implies some sort of association. Throughout Mark, Jesus does not pray together with any other character. Yet, here he uses a psalmic cry like a number of characters throughout the narrative (see the discussion on 'prayers to Jesus?'). Psalmic language was also used in Gethsemane. It could be argued that the effect is to associate Jesus with the human predicament as expressed in the OT Psalms, and in its extension in Mark. In an indirect sense, Jesus prays *with* the other characters. Jesus is not presented as praying to God for their concerns, but as subsuming their prayers into his relation with God. The petition must be thought of as Jesus' own petition. God the Father has forsaken Jesus the Son.

In the light of the "promises" of resurrection, the prayer must be thought of as a display of ultimate faith. The situation of complete abandonment makes for complete obedience, and at the same time complete faithfulness. God displays complete faithfulness in the resurrection and Jesus displays faithfulness and complete obedience in accepting God's absence. Jesus addresses God despite his absence, maintaining a one-sided line of engagement. The absolute uncertainty of death enables the demonstration of absolute faithfulness. The cross therefore is not an example of ultimate abandonment, but of ultimate faith and faithfulness. Most of the OT laments end in a confirmation of obedience. The plaintiff describes the situation at hand, and then declares the continued commitment to God (especially Ps 22; but also 30:8–10 followed by 11–12; 40:11–13 followed by 16 etc.). This is the response that the Marcan pray-er teaching attempts to elicit in the audience—total obedience and faith until the end will come. Also, the follower of Jesus is called to "loose his or her life to gain it" (8:34–35. Cf. also 9:35 on servanthood). The possibility of God's absence is a prerequisite for the search for him, and for personal engagement and dialogue. However, the audience is not called to reproduce Jesus' faithfulness. His act of salvation is presented as effecting a new relation to God (10:45). The audience's faith in God and in Jesus implies a sharing in Jesus' relationship to God.

Narrative Progression: Passion Narrative

The ministry narrative separated the prayers of Jesus and those of other characters. The followers of Jesus do not understand him and are ignorant of his nature and calling. In the passion this is exacerbated with Jesus being left by all. Yet, the moment where he is abandoned even by God

functions as a subversion of the distance between Jesus and his followers. There they are united with him. The cross is God's paradoxical will for his powerful servant, and also serves as a symbol of the life of his followers (8:34). From the beginning to the end of Mark, the audience is guided together with Jesus towards and beyond death.[89]

Conclusion

Construction of the Ideal Pray-er

Mark's construction of an ideal pray-er is not as explicit as in the other Gospels. Mark does not elaborate on teachings like Matthew, or write in the more literary style of Luke, which also includes parables on prayer. At one level his style is "terse" and immediate.[90] In Mark narrative scenes and short dialogues make up the main bulk of the text. The hurried pace of the narration also means that developments and motivations are seldom given (cf. the use of εὐθύς). Different scenes expand and continuously reinterpret each other.

Mark does not emphasise prayer in the same way as Matthew. The teaching is much more implicit and is inseparable from the narrative as such. Still, embedded in the narrative are also found passages of teaching, some of which concern prayer (point a: teaching by Jesus). Jesus displays both his authority and compassion in teaching (1:38).[91] The teaching on prayer and faith can be read as explicit utterances of what lies implicit in the narrative, like the saying "have faith in God" (11:22). Jesus teaches through example just as much as through direct instruction.[92] These teaching and narrative sections on prayer are united at the cross. For the audience, the teaching is by necessity understood in the context of the salvation wrought by Jesus.

In Mark the character of Jesus is more distanced from the disciples than in the other Synoptic Gospels (especially in their misunderstanding, cf. the 'secrecy motif'). Yet, this is only another way of relating the audience to his character (point b: paradigmatic and unique aspects of the

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89 Cf. Rhoads and Michie 1982, 139.

90 Rhoads and Michie 1982, 44.

91 It has been argued that is is by teaching that Jesus shows compassion. Reploh 1969, 51.

92 "The image of Jesus as teacher, as it is portrayed in Mark, establishes a teacher/disciple pattern within Christian tradition that provides a base for the transmission of Jesus tradition and the formation of Christian community." Robbins 1992, 119.

character of Jesus). Jesus is presented as wholly other, but also as searching to be united with the disciples (15:34). Throughout the disciples are characterised negatively. They do something wrong when they misunderstand him, he is to be followed. Despite, or because of, their present state, Jesus prepares for their acceptance. This can be thought to be realised at the cross which enables a new relationship to God. There Jesus is portrayed as associating with them (partly in prayer). The otherness of Jesus also means that he is not used as a paradigm to the same extent as in Luke, or even Matthew. However, Jesus can be seen as a type of prayer in one sense; he exemplifies obedience and sacrifice.

It is evident that Mark draws on basic Jewish piety (point c: ideals from the Old Testament). This is certainly the case as far as the basic background of the Gospel is concerned.[93] It is also evident in the way the Gospel attempts to carve out a place for its own in relation to Judaism at large (cf. the critique of 3:22; 4:12; 7:1–23; 12:13–17; 13:2; 14:49).[94] The little prayer language that is recounted is close to that of the Psalms (14:32–42; 15:34, not *Abba* though). Jesus is also portrayed praying the *Hallel* after the Passover meal (14:26; Ps 116–118). A number of the scenes in which Jesus is approached to perform a healing or exorcism also draw on psalmic forms.[95]

Mark is the masterpiece of implicit communication among the Gospels. Much of what goes on is a play on the pre-understanding of the audience (point d: play on pre-knowledge). Although the narrative recounts the acts and words of Jesus, his true nature is only revealed to the audience (cf. 1:1–3, 11), often through the use of irony. To them Jesus is portrayed as the unique Son who continually approaches the Father in prayer.[96] When he speaks "openly" (παρρησία 8:32) he is even rebuked by his disciples (different from Jn 16:25–33; 18:20). There is no explicit devotion directed to Jesus within the narrative (as in Mt 28:16–20 or Lk 24:50–53). The revelation of his character is the matter of some secrecy (4:10–12). His exalted status is only clear to the audience, ironically communicated through the Gerasene demoniac (5:7), and the mocking Roman soldiers (15:16–19). The

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[93] This goes for the basic concepts, and for modes of argumentation. Cf. for instance the Marcan use of *testimonia*, as in 1:2–3. On this cf. Donahue and Harrington 2002, 61.

[94] Cf. Gnilka 1978, 29.

[95] Cf. Glöckner 1983.

[96] In Mark, Jesus is sometimes echoing OT figures with a special rapport with God. Cf. Becker 1975, 110. Cf. also the bold figures in Gen 32:26–30; Ex 33:12–34:9; 1 Kings 18:27–38, 41–46; 2 Kings 2:2–9; 4:14–28. See also Pesiq. Rab. Kah. 22:2.

audience also understand how the characters act better than they know themselves when they ask for Jesus' help in various situations.

The secrecy is part of Mark's literary strategy, and sets in motion a search for Jesus.[97] An initiated audience already knows the final outcome and therefore sees the "true" significance of the events recounted. The mockers at the cross insult Jesus and call him to come down from the cross so that they can believe in him (15:32). The audience knows that this is exactly what will happen; he will rise from the dead. It knows the truth of what the Roman centurion is led to "confess" at the cross, that Jesus is the "Son of God" (15:39 serving as an inclusio with 1:11). In the rest of the narrative this title is only used by God himself, and demons that seem to have some insight into heavenly realities (3:11; 5:7; 9:7). The result is that the implied audience is placed on this level of heavenly revelation. It knows Jesus, follows his teaching, and has faith in God. This it does in the acceptance of Jesus as God's salvation. The result is that faith is directed to God, and implicitly also to Jesus. Only then the prayer Mark calls for is possible.

In Mark the narrative progression is central in the development of the theme of prayer (point e: narrative progresssion). The teaching of the ministry narrative is positive and emphasizes the power of God available to the pray-er (9:29; 11:20–25). In the passion this picture of prayer is qualified by Gethsemane and the cross. The basic tenet of complete confidence in the ability of God to save is the same, but the tone is different. As the narrative progresses, it is faithful obedience which comes into focus. There is a progression in the three similar prayer scenes which occur at the beginning of Jesus' ministry (1:35), the middle (6:46), and at the end (14:32–42). In all three, Jesus withdraws from others to be alone and pray. The lack of description of words prayed in the first two scenes creates an expectation satisfied only in the last scene which thereby gains precedence. The prayer utterance of 14:36 is further emphasised by the statement in 14:39 that he prayed "the same" again. The result is an emphasis on obedience and faithfulness to the will of God (14:36). In none of the scenes do the disciples pray with Jesus despite what in the context appears as a move toward such a sharing. This is only accomplished at the cross where Jesus unites with the predicament of his followers in the expressed absence of

[97] Cf. Rhoads and Michie 1982, 104–105. To Kingsbury "Mark guides the reader through a progressive unveiling of Jesus' identity." Kingsbury 1983, 20. Evans argues that "Mark's secrecy motif evidently serves what may be described as a catechetical function." Evans 2001, lxxi.

God (see exegesis of 15:34). There he overcomes all opposition and finally prays with them.[98] The result of this progressive construction is that as insiders, the audience is in a position to follow and observe him at the three times of prayer. In this the audience receives revelation on his true nature.

The characters of the narrative are aids in directing the audience to the right form of response (point f: characterisation).[99] Mark emphasises the uniqueness of Jesus, even to the extent that other characters are negatively portrayed.[100] In general Mark tends to present a bleaker picture of the disciples than the other Gospels.[101] They fail to understand the parables (4:13 cf. 4:34; 7:18), the teaching on divorce (10:10–12), his death (8:32–33; 9:9–13, 32), the calming of the storm (4:35–41), the walking on water (6:45–52). In the end they flee from his side despite his predictions of what would come to pass. Jesus even rebukes the disciples for not understanding despite his private teaching and his miracles (8:21).[102] However, that Jesus is wholly unique only means that none are in a privileged position. For Mark this seems to imply that all are therefore included in Jesus' saving work. The audience is in a position to do right what the characters did wrong, and should it fail help is available like it was for the disciples.[103] The initial positive view of the disciples leads the audience to associate with them at first, but their failure forces a reconsideration of their own relation to Jesus.[104]

In its main aspects the eschatology of Mark is similar to that of Matthew. The ideal pray-er refers to God's salvation, the 'ideal reality' which is about to be realised (point g: eschatology). Verse 1:15 sets the stage with a

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[98] So Lightfoot 1951, 114.

[99] This is especially the case with the misunderstandings. Hurtado 1996, 22.

[100] Those with a primarily historical approach see this as polemic against various historical communities. Tyson 1961, 261–268; Trocmé 1963; Weeden 1971; Kelber 1979, 88; Kelber 1985.

[101] Black displays the negative and positive uses of the Twelve and Peter. Black 1989, 41–46.

[102] The fact that Mark could afford such a negative picture of the disciples suggests that he had no need to rectify them. They are at the time of writing accepted by God, and the community.

[103] This display of help encourages the audience. So Tannehill 1977; Malbon 1983; Malbon 1986, 104. Cf. Best's proposal of a pastoral intention for the Gospel. Best 1979, 84–92; Best 1981, 12; Best 1982, 19–35. Likewise Hooker 1983, 88f, 104, 116f.

[104] Some see a more positive stage before 6:44. So Hurtado 1996, 21–23. So also Reploh 1969. To Tannehill "the more clearly the reader sees the disciples represent himself, the more clearly the necessary rejection of the disciples' behavior becomes a negation of one's past self." Tannehill 1977, 395.

reference to the kingdom which is "at hand" (ἤγγικεν pf. of ἐγγίζω).[105] It is imminent (9:1; 10:23–25; 15:43). The eschatological salvation is soon to be realised, at the return of the Son of Man (13:1–37). The ideal pray-er pursues this reality in prayer. Mark can be thought to conceive of the human predicament as a tension between the decisive victory of Jesus and the present experiences of the audience. They will have to pray to continue Jesus' battle against evil (9:29), to remain in communion with the Father (11:20–25), to avoid temptation and be kept until the return of the master of the house (14:32–42). They are at present unfulfilled. However, they rest assured that God will save, like he once raised Jesus, *despite* the present circumstances. In Mark God is thought to work according to a plan (cf. for instance "as it is written" 1:2; 7:6; 9:13; 14:21). However, this plan seems to include opposition to following Jesus. The audience is left with the choice of following or abandoning Jesus. The narrative and characters are set up to tilt the decision in the direction of faithful discipleship. Prayer is a major way in which this tension, which includes evil, is to be met. In this context, prayer is a proper act in the light of the tension between the presence of the kingdom and the absence of its king (cf. 15:16–20). Jesus' death and resurrection exemplify how the absence of God opens the possibility of being ultimately faithful.[106] Altogether, prayer is a marker of the Marcan eschatology.

Description of the Ideal Pray-er

Mark does not provide many words to be uttered in prayer. Such an observation points to the Marcan strategy of implicit communication. It presupposes a community which conveys a particular praxis to initiates. The text does not function without such a companion. It can be observed that the prayer material is not an ad hoc addition to the narrative, it is integrated into other themes. Prayer is used to emphasise the Christological point of Jesus' communion with the Father. There are also implicit hints at devotion to Jesus, evident to the audience. Mark is geared towards making the audience faithful disciples from the calling of the first disciples in 1:14 and 2:14 to the direction to meet Jesus in Galilee in 16:7. Throughout Mark, discipleship is portrayed in simple spatial language (being with him 3:13, sitting around him 3:34; 4:10; hearing him 4:1–20, following him, 1:16–20;

[105] The meaning is future. So Fuller 1954, 21–25.

[106] In Mark suffering is a treatment of theodicy, not a polemic against other Christologies. So Donahue 1982, 587.

10:52). The two main themes from the programmatic statement of 1:15, "repentance" and "faith," appear to fit the description of prayer presented above. In the following paragraphs prayer will be discussed with reference to these theological emphases of Mark.

As already noted, the prayer from Gethsemane is emphasised in the narrative: "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want" (14:34). This text is of course first of all a Christological text about Jesus. It is safe to argue that in Mark Jesus did not have to repent. Still, for the post-cross audience the scene can be read as an example for them. This is evident in the teaching which is interspersed with Jesus' acts, and in the cross-bearing utterance of 8:34. Jesus is not a direct ethical example, but the inclusion of his followers in his death and resurrection enables them to be his disciples, to follow him. The result is that the description of his progression towards the cross, and beyond it to the resurrection is construed as a transformative narrative for their lives. The "whatever" to be prayed for (11:24) is that which is in accordance with his character. God's will, which Jesus always pursued and enacted, is a call to repentance for his followers.

In Mark, prayer and faith are inseparable.[107] The consistent picture of Jesus at prayer constructs a character of faith (1:35; 6:41, 46; 8:6; 14:33, 35, 39; 15:34).[108] A major part of following Jesus is to display faith like he did.[109] However, just as the prayer of Jesus is not immediately analogous to that of his followers, neither is his faith the same as theirs. Central in Jesus' prayer-teaching is the call to "have faith in God" (11:22).[110] In the first part of the narrative various characters call out for help and are helped by Jesus. Still, Jesus remains the one "who believes" (9:23), all others remain "unbelieving" (9:19). They can receive faith as a gift from Jesus (9:24). Only in light of the cross and Jesus' salvation can they pray in the right manner, then true faith is possible (15:32, 39).[111] This faith is centred on the cross and the audience is called to be faithful like Jesus—unto death (πίστις here meaning both faith and faithfulness/trust). The 'prayers' to Jesus and the ironic commentary in the context of the cross (15:32) suggest that

[107] For the "life of faith" in Mark cf. Schweizer 1978.

[108] Cf. Powell 1963, 182, 183 n. 15; Schreiber, 1967; Martin 1972, 110; Shaw 1983, 214f; Senior 1984, 123; Marshall 1989, 239–242.

[109] So Marshall 1989, 135. Cf. also Beavis 1986.

[110] To many it is the centre of Marcan theology. So Schlatter 1927; Schreiber 1967, 235; Martin 1972, 108; Marshall 1989.

[111] So Ostmeyer 2006, 226, 234.

Jesus himself is to be seen as an object of this faith in God. In Mark the disciples pray to *Abba* Father, but Jesus answers. In this Jesus appears as a character in between God and humans. He is both an example of faith, and the one who makes faith possible. In fact, his example could be seen as part of what makes faith possible.

Some Further Anthropological Reflections

In Mark, Jesus is separated from all other characters. The disciples do not understand his true nature. Some of his followers are even filled with fear at the empty tomb (16:8). Those who do realise who Jesus is are outsiders within the story. None are really able to follow Jesus as he has called his disciples to do (1:17–20). The result is a portrayal of the human predicament as basically negative; none are in a position to receive the revelation about God's saving act. Yet, this is exactly what the audience is able to do. Jesus is presented as a ransom for the disciples, despite themselves (10:45). The result is to emphasise God's radical acceptance and provision despite human shortcomings. After Jesus' decisive victory on the cross his disciples can follow him, and do his ministry (cf. 6:7). In that sense Jesus has associated himself with them, and they exercise his authority in prayer (9:29; cf. 14:22–23; 15:34). The positive prayer-teaching of ch. 11 should be seen as a participation in Jesus' power. The result is that faith is to be seen as a participation in Jesus' saving act. When the disciples pray they are, through association with Jesus, in the process of extending that act.

The new relationship to God is above all expressed in the notion of God as Father. To Mark, God is revealed as *Abba* "Father" in prayer (14:36).[112] The only time Jesus speaks of the sonship of the disciples is in the prayer-teaching in 11:25.[113] The uniqueness of Jesus is maintained through the use "your Father" (11:25). Still, the relationship to God which Jesus accomplishes is expressed in prayer to the Father; the Father who Jesus shares with them as 'the Son.' The disciples' plight has been included in the Son's relation to the Father (15:34). The kinship language places the emphasis on the personal aspect of faith. "Have faith in God" means faithfulness to the Father. In Mark, God the Father is not conceived of in abstract terms.

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[112] Robbins exaggerates when arguing that "the Gospel of Mark virtually eliminates interaction between God and Jesus and between God and the followers of Jesus in order to focus on the interaction between Jesus and his disciple-communities." Robbins 1992, 167.

[113] Gnilka 1979, 134.

He is only accessible as a person in a relationship.[114] Calling God 'Father' is a performative act that places the pray-er in a particular position vis-à-vis him.[115] To Mark prayer is an expression of a new relation brought about in Jesus, and at the same time its continual maintenance. To Mark 'faith' is not intellectual assent but a religious epistemology that fuses subjectivity and truth in the relation to God.

The tension at the basis of the human predicament is given a concrete setting in the accounts of battles against demons. To Mark there are unseen spiritual powers, some of which are harmful and which can impact humans. Actually their intention is to do just that, and they must be countered. The influence of these forces can be described as a form of pollution. The body is contaminated by an "unclean" (ἀκάθαρτος) spirit (1:23–28; 3:11, 30; 5:2; 6:7; 7:25; 9:25). The pray-er is placed in a situation of continuous battle against forces of evil. It is true that Jesus was and remains totally victorious over these powers. However, his followers must *follow* him in this matter; victory is not seen as automatic. A choice must be made between faith on the one hand and destruction at the hand of Satan and demons on the other (9:22 ἵνα ἀπολέσῃ αὐτόν).[116]

In the prayer-teaching Jesus describes two opposed faculties within humans, the "flesh" and the "spirit" (14:38). The flesh is able to be tempted by evil, leading them not to pray. However, the spirit is able to pray and display faith. On this account, prayer is a way of changing the human person.[117] It leads the pray-er on the right path of discipleship. In its context the saying is also an assurance that it will keep the pray-er away from temptations, from the time of trial. To Mark prayer opens for the power of God to work for and in the pray-er. Prayer leads the pray-er to do the right thing; not the act itself, but the answer received from God.

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[114] A notion that fits well in with the so-called 'secrecy theme.'

[115] Cf. Donald Evans' use of speech act theory in discussions of God as Creator. Evans 1963, 174. To him the "biblical conception of language as an activity, of words as dynamic instruments, is alien to philosophies in which words are only used to express inner thoughts or to state facts." Evans 1963, 164.

[116] The picture of the opposition is certainly connected to the perceived greatness of Jesus' victory. It is also an aspect that pushes the audience in the direction of Jesus, and into extending the community of his followers.

[117] See how Marshall makes the argument that faith is a process of learning and personal transformation. Marshall 1989, 134–176. esp. p. 139.

CHAPTER FOUR

LUKE

Introduction

Luke is the canonical Gospel with the most material on prayer. The theme plays an important role in Lucan theology. It can be observed that Jesus' first and last acts are prayers (3:21; 23:46). Often this Gospel refers to prayer where it is not included in the Synoptic parallels (3:21, 5:16; 6:12; 9:18; 9: 28; the only clear Synoptic parallel is 22:41–45). The material on prayer includes stylised prayers, narrative references, and teaching.[1] How the references to prayer fit into the Gospel depends on how Luke is perceived as a whole.[2] Different suggestions as to his program inevitably lead to different 'functions' for prayer. A number of such 'functions' have been suggested by scholars describing prayer in Luke. Here they will be used as a suggestive starting point for the exegesis. As far as the theology of the Lucan prayer material is concerned the scholarly work on prayer in Luke can be divided into three main groups: 1) Jesus as a paradigm, 2) the use of prayer in Christology, and 3) the use of prayer for the construction of salvation history.[3]

Some have highlighted the way in which the prayer texts present Jesus as an example for the community by providing patterns and principles (point 1). This is the approach taken by W. Ott.[4] He argues that Luke's main purpose with the prayer-material is the example it provided for the early "Church"—its *Vorbildscharakter*.[5] The main example Jesus provides

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[1] For a thorough study on the Lucan prayer vocabulary. Cf. Ostmeyer 2006. Cf. also Crump 1992, 13.

[2] There are many suggestions as to what Luke's program or intention is. Maddox lists seven options. Maddox 1982, 20–23. Bock gives eleven. Bock 1994, 14. Cf. further Bovon 2006.

[3] For a historical background study of prayer in Luke cf. now Förster's study *Das gemeinschaftliche Gebet in der Sicht des Lukas*. Förster 2007. In it Förster compares and contrasts the prayer material of Luke with comparable material in Jewish, Pagan and Christian sources. Förster 2007, 30.

[4] Ott 1965.

[5] Ott 1965, 97. Cf. 94–99.

is that of a persistent pray-er, who also teaches persistence.[6] The guiding text for the whole study is Lk 18:1 ("that they ought always to pray and not loose heart"). To Ott, this is a contrast to the Matthean prayer-teaching which to him centres on piety and the character of God.[7] This is due to Luke's loss of hope in the *parousia* and the need for the survival of the community.[8] Ott further argues that the prayer references are a later construction that attempt to provide new means of cohesion and focus. To him, prayer therefore replaces enthusiasm. At places Luke can even be thought to present persevering prayer as a means to salvation.[9] To Ott, this kind of prayer is focused on spiritual matters, and the answer is the Holy Spirit.[10] L. Monloubou likewise argues that Jesus' prayers are a "catechesis" on the prayer of the "Christians."[11] The prayers with content (10:21; 22:41–44; 24:34, 46) are analysed to show how Luke's redaction of Mark serves to present Jesus as a model.[12] In contrast to Ott Monloubou emphasises the positive role of religious experience. To Monloubou, a perceived communion with God is at the centre of Luke's argument.[13] The intention of presenting Jesus as a paradigm is to recreate the communion with the Father in the "reader."

Several exegetes have argued that the prayer-material is not only paradigmatic but also serves Christological ends (point 2).[14] For instance, the baptismal scene is central to the development of the character of Jesus, and is one of prayer. However, the argument is taken a step beyond being a literary marker of the importance of the scene. Prayer emphasises that God is behind Jesus' ministry (5:16–17; 6:12–19; 9:29). More than that, it emphasises that Jesus and God are in continual communion. In some passages it is emphasised that Jesus is a special kind of pray-er, not only a paradigm.[15] To this group of scholars the Lucan Jesus should be seen as a

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[6] Ott 1965, 138.

[7] Ott 1965, 137.

[8] Here he must be thought to follow Conzelmann and Grässer too closely. See Grässer 1957; Conzelmann 1961. For revisions of their views which allows for imminent expectations in Luke cf. Maddox 1982, 100–157; Nolland 1998, 63–81; Holmås 2011, 117–119.

[9] Ott 1965, 64, 73–75, 139–143. Crump rightly rejects this interpretation. Crump 1992, 4. Without the framework of a loss of hope in the parousia the connection between prayer and salvation looks different.

[10] Ott 1965, 139.

[11] Monloubou 1976, 61.

[12] Monloubou 1976, 59–61.

[13] Monloubou 1976, 57.

[14] Plymale shows how Hebrew and Greco-Roman authors used prayer to "reveal the character of the supplicant." Plymale 1991, 30.

[15] Crump 1992, 8.

heavenly "Intercessor."[16] L. Feldkämper described the Christological functions of Lucan prayers in his doctoral thesis *Der betende Jesus als Heilsmittler nach Lukas*.[17] He argues that Luke is interested in Jesus' prayers for the specific reason of explaining his person.[18] Yet, Christology also implies soteriology. To Feldkämper, Lucan soteriology is built on the whole life of Jesus Christ, not just the cross and resurrection.[19] Jesus the pray-er has the unique role of enabling the prayers of the "Church."[20] David Crump likewise emphasises the Christological implications of the prayer-texts in Luke. He does this by letting the scene in which Jesus prays with his followers in 9:18 set the tone for the rest of the prayer passages in Luke. He argues that in this passage the point is not that prayer directs salvation history, but that prayer leads to the disciples' realisation of Jesus' Messiahship.[21] On the whole the prayer passages are an illustration of what happens when Jesus prays.[22] To Crump, Jesus' prayers direct God's electing hand in that they enable the "acquisition of spiritual insight."[23] This is a role unique to Jesus as illumination never comes through the prayers of anyone else.[24] This efficacy is based on Jesus' antecedent status as Son, and not on his exaltation.[25] What then does the prayer of "Christians" accomplish? To Crump, this is a faulty question since only God can accomplish things and Jesus' prayers are the ones that lead to insight. However, human prayer is a form of obedience since it acknowledges God's will. It opens the door to heaven, but in no way directs the answer.[26] All in all, Crump could be thought to take the emphasis on cognitive aspects of revelation in prayer too far.[27] Also, there is the danger that discipleship

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16 Cf. Dodd 1959, 158.

17 Feldkämper 1978.

18 Feldkämper 1978, 17.

19 Feldkämper 1978, 336.

20 Feldkämper 1978, 337. This is because the prayers of the disciples are indebted to Jesus' prayers, the disciples need the Spirit given by Jesus, and they pray to Jesus.

21 Crump 1992, 24. The way this particular interpretation of the scene is made the determinative passage on prayer in Luke exemplifies the problem of pursuing a strict thesis-driven approach to prayer in Luke.

22 Crump 1992, 110.

23 Crump 1992, 2, 67.

24 Crump 1992, 128.

25 Crump 1992, 74.

26 To Crump the answer to any prayer is the Holy Spirit. Crump 1992, 115–116, 133.

27 Crump 1992, 6. Prayer gives insight into what God is already doing, enabling the prayer to take part in it. A related problem is the way the exegesis is seen as a "process of trying to abstract principles of theological reality from Luke's account." Crump 1992, 162. In a later, more popular, work Crump shows that these quotes should not be read to the effect that the Gospels presents prayer as changing only the pray-er's understanding of

is mainly understood as a process in which the follower of Jesus is being acted upon by God; a picture not congenial to Luke who seems to think more in terms of a covenant.

A third group of scholars highlight Luke's use of prayer in his conception of salvation history (point 3).[28] To S. S. Smalley, prayer is Luke's way of emphasising that specific moments in the *Heilsgeschichte* were directed by God.[29] Prayer and salvation history come together in the giving of the Holy Spirit (Lk 3:21–22; 10:21–22; 11:13; Acts 2:1–4; 8:15). It is the giving of the Holy Spirit which is the answer to human prayer.[30] In Luke, the Holy Spirit is central in God's distribution of salvation to the individual. In his work on prayer in Luke, S. F. Plymale comes to similar conclusions.[31] He builds on O. G. Harris' unpublished thesis *Prayer in Luke-Acts: A Study in the Theology of Luke*. From this source he takes on the notion that "Luke conceives of prayer as an important means by which God guides the course of redemptive history."[32] To Plymale the single most influential tradition on prayer used in Luke is the "realization of a responsibility to fulfil the aims of God because of the mutuality fostered by the covenantal relationship."[33] Such an approach maintains a strong connection between Jesus and his later followers—they are all included in the outworking of God's plan.

Geir Otto Holmås' work *Prayer and Vindication in Luke-Acts: The theme of Prayer within the Context of the Legitimating and Edifying Objective of the Lukan Narrative* was written in parallel to the present work.[34] As the title indicates Holmås analyses the role of the prayer-material within the framework of Luke as a historical narrative.[35] Holmås could in one sense be said to be an exponent of the salvation historical approach to the

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reality, in a form of therapy. Crump there emphasises that the Bible works with a personal picture of God, and emphasises his openness towards humans in an interpersonal relationship. Crump 2006, 284–286.

[28] For a discussion of salvation history cf. Cullmann 1967.

[29] Smalley 1973, 64.

[30] Smalley 1973, 62.

[31] Plymale 1991. Cf. also Plymale 1990.

[32] Harris 1966, 98. Quoted in Plymale 1990, 532; Plymale 1991, 3, 8 and throughout.

[33] Plymale 1991, 32.

[34] Holmås 2011. This work only became available to me as I revised the present work for publication. Holmås' approach is the one which lies closest to my own. The greatest difference is Holmås' stronger focus on historical reconstructions as a heuristic key, especially the apologetical needs of the early community. The result is that our notion of 'theology' is somewhat different, with Holmås more intent on reconstructing the *Sitz im leben* of the implied author as the main way to construe the text's 'meaning'.

[35] Holmås 2011, 53–56.

prayer material. However, He qualifies the approach of Harris and Plymale in the emphasis on the sociological and didactic consequences of the salvation historical uses made of prayer within the narrative.[36] Holmås performs a close reading of the texts and makes projections as to what kind of sociological circumstances might have given rise to the particular picture yielded. This allows him to integrate the salvation historical use of prayer with the paraenetic elements, particularly the paradigmatic function of the character of Jesus.[37] To him the prayer material serves as a divine confirmation of the developments in salvation history evident in Jesus and his followers (especially Paul).[38] In this sense the material serves as a boost of the identity-construction of the early audience.[39] It can be understood as a "legitimation" and "validation" of the narrative of Luke, mainly in relation to its Jewish origin.[40] The Jesus movement is a fulfilment of eschatological promises. Since the audience share its heritage it will see answers to prayer in the form of vindication at the end of time. Like their master the followers of Jesus are to trust in God's eschatological vindication.[41] In this sense Holmås argues that the purpose of the text of Luke is primarily pragmatic and indeed apologetic.[42]

These different approaches emphasise different functions of prayer in Luke's unified narrative. Luke displays the greatest variety of Christological traditions among the Gospels.[43] Likewise, the prayer material is also

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[36] Holmås proposes a "substantial revision of Harris's proposal." To him "prayer is tightly associated with the plan and plot of Luke's historical narrative—especially but not exclusively at strategic junctures—as a constituent of the apologetic and validating argument developed in the work." Holmås 2011, 6. In that sense the thesis is an integration of literary and historical concerns.

[37] To Holmås the salvation historical and didactic functions of prayer can be synthesized since "readers who heed Jesus' summons to pray without ceasing will experience in their own life-setting the divine logic of salvation that pervades the foundation story of the movement to which they belong." Holmås 2011, 266.

[38] Holmås 2011, 114, 259.

[39] Holmås 2011, 61.

[40] Holmås 2011, 60–61, 262–265.

[41] Holmås 2011, 83.

[42] Holmås faults Feldkämper and Crump for proceeding "from the *a priori* assumption that Jesus' prayer-life in Luke-Acts is of a unique kind." To him this leads to a faulty attempt to look for "ideational theology (Christology and soteriology)" where it cannot be found. Holmås 2011, 78. There is some leverage in this if the texts are read as containing building-blocks of a systematic theology—as already noted this is something Crump is not wholly free of. However, Holmås' approach is, as all human enquiries, equally biased with its own *a priori*. He has chosen to focus on a reconstruction of the *Sitz im leben* as the primary heuristic key to understand the text. Yet, how such a reconstruction is the conclusive way to get at the texts 'meaning' is not self-evident.

[43] So Evans 1990, 65; Beck 1989, 117.

used in more contexts, and with more ends, than in the other Gospels. In the present chapter, it is the way that the material constructs an ideal that will be presented. The arguments of the above mentioned exegetes will be discussed in the exegesis when appropriate. At the outset of the exegesis it bears repeating that "[t]he interpretation of *what* Luke says on any subject must take into account *where* in his story he says it."[44] In Luke, the "theme" of prayer is gradually developed as the narrative progresses. In order to expound this narrative progression, the argument has been divided into four sections: infancy narrative, early ministry narrative, travel narrative and passion narrative. The introduction in 1:1–4 sets the reading of the narrative in an initiated Jewish-Christian setting. Theophilus (v. 3) has already received teaching, which will be reinforced.

Infancy Narrative 1:1–2:52

The songs and prophetic utterances of the infancy introduce Jesus and set the tone of Luke-Acts.[45] This section provides a transition from earlier Jewish tradition to the age of fulfilment introduced by Jesus (1:1–2, 13–20, 28–37, 46–55, 67–79; 2:10–12, 14–15, 29–32, 34–35; see especially 1:48 ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν). The new period of fulfilment starts with the birth of the Messiah and continues unabated in the story of his followers in Acts. Arguably Luke works with two distinct eras; the time of prophecy and the time of fulfilment.[46] The transition of the infancy narrative functions as a summary of earlier tradition and shapes the understanding of piety from the very outset. The unmistakably Semitic language and OT motifs of the infancy narrative ground the whole narrative in the varied landscape of Second Temple Judaism.[47] This setting is a major part of Luke's construction of an ideal pray-er.[48] It sets out the theological frame for a correct

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[44] Johnson 1991, 5.

[45] Tannehill 1986, 31. For historical questions I have relied on: Farris 1985; Brown 1993; Mittmann-Richert 1996.

[46] So Bovon 2002, 11. Pace Conzelmann 1961. Following his argument of three distinct salvation historical periods Conzelmann argues that Luke's "picture of the early church is not meant to harmonize with the present, but stands in contrast. . . . The characteristic summary statements about the life of the early community do not reflect present conditions, neither do they represent an ideal for the present." Conzelmann 1961, 14–15. Convincing critique of Conzelmann can be found in Robinson 1964; Marshall 1970; Minear 1980; Maddox 1982.

[47] Luke uses *prosopopoeia*, writing in a tone appropriate to character and content. Cf. Johnson 1991, 7. The vocabulary is that of the LXX. Litwak 2005, 66–115.

[48] A number of earlier discussions of prayer in Luke did not include this material. One major reason for this is probably the contention of Conzelmann that these chapters are

response to the narrative about Jesus. Jesus' followers spring out of pious Israel.

1:10 Temple Piety

Together with the reference in 24:53, this verse frames the whole Gospel in a piety appropriate to the "Temple" (the Temple as Luke envisages it, cf. 19:46). This episode is the first such example with its reference to communal prayer, a practice taken for granted.[49] The prayer in the Temple is a communal activity performed by the pious laity at the hour of sacrifice (Sir 50:19; Josephus *Ag. Ap.* 2. 196; cf. Acts 3:1). On the spatial level it can be observed that all scenes of the infancy narrative are placed in the close vicinity of Jerusalem. The Gospel thus starts in Jerusalem and ends in Jerusalem. This is part of the larger movement from the Temple and Jerusalem to the ends of the world. On a more comprehensive level, the Temple is part of what explains the Lucan emphasis on prayer. As I will argue below, prayer is presented as a central point of connection between the followers of Jesus and their Jewish origins.

1:13 Zechariah's Prayer

Zechariah and his wife are righteous (v. 6 δίκαιοι) Jews who live according to the commandments. The fact that they did not have a child might otherwise be seen as a curse (Ex 23:26). In general the lack of an heir implied an insecure future and also had religious importance, especially to a priestly family. Drawing on a common OT type scene Luke shows how their misfortune is reversed in response to prayer (Abram and Sarai Gen 16–21; Isaac and Rebecca Gen 25; Jacob and Rachel Gen 29:31–30:24; Hannah and Elkanah 1 Sam 2). The language used of Zechariah, and the reference to God hearing (here an indirect εἰσηκούσθη v. 13), are common OT ways of describing prayer situations. The righteous pray and are answered.[50] On account of the covenant between God and his people Zechariah can pray and receive an answer.[51]

Here an angel is sent to announce the answer to the prayer (Cf. OT scenes of theophanies in answer to prayer, for instance Gen 17:1–22). The angels also feature in other prayer-texts in Luke (22:43) and are markers

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foreign to Lucan theology. Conzelmann 1961, 109. I follow Brown in his rejection of this thesis. Brown 1993, 239–255. On this cf. also Holmås 2011, 65–67.

[49] Cf. 2 Chr 6:12–42; Dan 9:21. For incense and prayer: Ps 141:2; Rev 5:8; 8:3–4.

[50] Johnson 1991, 33.

[51] Hamman 1971, 50.

of the worldview of the Gospel. In general, Luke seems to emphasise the visible presence of the divine, also in scenes of prayer (3:22 etc). The conception itself is presented as an act of God comparable to that which occurred to Abraham and Sarah. This is just one example of the way the story about Jesus is presented as wholly instigated by God himself.

1:46–55 The Magnificat

The prayer-song of Mary uses a wide range of covenant language ("servant" v. 48 δούλης, "generations" vv. 48 and 50, "his name" v. 49, "mercy" v. 50 ἔλεος, "Israel his servant" v. 54 παιδός, "remembrance" v. 54 μνησθῆναι, "ancestors" v. 55, and "Abraham and his descendants forever" v. 55 cf. σπέρματι). To Luke, God is merciful to those who depend on him in a covenant relation (cf. 12:5; 18:2, 4; 23:40; Acts 10:2, 22, 35; 13:16, 26). In Luke the 'covenant' is probably to be understood in general terms as the one established with Abraham and his descendants (v. 55 cf. 2:29–32), later to be re-interpreted at the last supper (22:15–20). Interestingly, in this passage Luke seems to be drawing on a number of exemplary OT models of piety (Miriam: Ex 15:1–18, Deborah: Judg 5:1–31, Hannah: 1 Sam 2:1–10, and hymns of praise: Pss 33; 47; 136).[52] The result is to represent a piety and prayer in concurrence with OT pictures of the covenant between God and his people.

Mary's prayer-song is the first extended characterisation of God in Luke. The use of "the Lord" (κύριος) in v. 46 with a parallel "God" (θεός) in v. 47 establishes God's sovereignty over the pray-er (cf. Ps 70:1; 62:11–12). The initial words also describe this "Lord" as "Saviour" (σωτῆρί μου v. 47; ὁ δυνατός v. 49).[53] In vv. 46–49, Mary praises this Saviour for acting on her behalf.[54] 'Saviour' is a designation which sets out both the need for salvation and the place to get it. In this, the characterisation and epithets embody larger narratives in short addresses. The perception of God constructs certain expectations and acts in the ideal pray-er.

Mary is clearly presented as an ideal in 1:28, 42–45. The tone of the prayer-song resembles that used in the OT scenes of humbly approaching God, kings or other potentates.[55] Each mentioned address of God

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[52] Fitzmyer 1981, 359. For tables cf. Creed 1930, 303f; Brown 1993, 358ff.
[53] Fitzmyer 1981, 367. Cf. LXX Ps 24:5; 25:5; 27:9 and Is 12:2; Mic 7:7.
[54] Cf. LXX Ps 12:4; 104:24; Ez 20:33–34; Is 51:5, 9; 53:1; Zeph 3:17.
[55] A pre-Lucan Jewish (Christian) provenance seems plausible. So Fitzmyer 1981, 361, 378; Brown 1993, 350–355.

("Saviour," "Lord," etc.) equally characterises Mary as 'subject,' 'recipient of salvation,' etc. Mary exemplifies an appropriate response to God in being a servant who pursues the will of God (1:38). She starts her address by expressing praise from the innermost being (v. 46 ἡ ψυχή μου is parallel to v. 47 τὸ πνεῦμά μου cf. Job 12:10; Ps 77:3–4; Is 26:9). She further presents herself as "humble" (ταπείνωσιν v. 48), which is repeated as a general trait in v. 52. Joy is the proper reaction to the fulfilment of promises (ἠγαλλίασεν v. 47 cf. Jn 16:24).[56] Finally, Mary "fears" or "reveres" God (v. 50). Through prayer she can be thought to participate actively in God's concerns and plans.[57] The general tone of the song and the change from first person to third person towards the end weaken the division between Mary and the audience (same as in Ps 9; 30; 66; 68; 72; 117; 137). This is also clear from the initial call to join in the praise in psalmic fashion (1:46). To Luke a true form of piety is possible before Jesus. Actually the latter is nothing but a true continuation of the former. The direct use of ideals other than Jesus within the narrative sets Luke apart from the other canonical Gospels. Those texts point to types outside the narrative, like Moses, but not within the narrative.

The prayer-song includes its share of differentiation through negative characterisation. Mary mentions a number of groups that suppress God's people and herself. They are the "the proud" of v. 51 (ὑπερήφανος), "the powerful" of v. 52 and "the rich" of v. 53. These designations should probably be seen as ways of being independent of God (cf. 12:21). In the OT, an evil person is often described as one who does not acknowledge dependence upon God (Gen 11:1–9; Deut 8:17–18; Ps 10; 30:7–8; 52:7, 9). The pray-er belongs to a group associated with God, whereas the opponents are against God. The generalised language enables applications to ever new groups of opponents. The passage shows a remarkable similarity to Is 29:13–24, pointing to the thought that God is in the process of fulfilling promises and doing something new (an explicitly stated goal of the Gospel, 1:1–2).

The act of "reminding" God is commonly found in OT covenant relationships (cf. Is 1:54; Ps 8:5; 74:2; 105:8, 42; 119:49). After the initial praise,

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[56] The theme of joy runs throughout Luke (Lk 1:14, 44; 2:10; 6:23; 8:13; 10:17; 15:10; 24:52). Cf. Jn 16:24.

[57] The prayer includes religious, social and national aspects. The use of the aorist in vs. 51–54 is ambiguous. Cf. Marshall 1978, 84. Here they will be seen as referring to God's past acts towards his people (displaying his character—on that account, gnomic). Cf. also 1:78.

the conjunction (ὅτι) of v. 48 introduces the reasons for Mary's praise (as in the psalmic use of ὅτι/כי). Covenantal prayers often take the form of "reminding" God of his works of old, and implicitly asking him to work again (cf. μνησθῆναι v. 54; cf. also ἀνάμνησιν in 22:19; cf. Acts 10:24). This places the pray-er on a time-line of religious experience and expectation. Present day pray-ers are placed in the same category as those of old. It is in light of God's earlier acts that he is approached for yet another display of his "might." The "reminding" of God functions as a petition. At the same time it is a rehearsal of tradition which directs both the perception of reality and the possible outcomes of the prayer.[58]

1:67–79 The Benedictus

This passage uses the same language and tone as the *Magnificat* starting with a blessing of "the Lord God of Israel" v. 68.[59] Most of the general observations made concerning the previous song apply to this 'prophecy.' It provides a general setting of piety that determines the understanding of the prayer material which follows. Like the *Magnificat* this utterance uses OT covenant language (David, prophets, salvation, fathers, covenant, and Abraham), it speaks of two opposed general groups, it praises and 'reminds' God, it speaks of national (71, 74) and individual concerns (77–78). As in the *Magnificat*, God is again presented as "Saviour" through a description of his acts. The move from aorist to future (turning point in v. 76) also implies that at this point of the story, salvation has both realised and non-realised elements. See especially the introductory use of "has visited" (ἐπεσκέψατο in v. 68) and the conclusion with "will visit" (ἐπισκέψεται v. 78). The initial remark that the utterance comes at the instigation of the Holy Spirit is highly relevant for the Lucan presentation of prayer. In Luke, the Holy Spirit has a central role in 'inspiring' prayer (see especially 2:29–32; 10:21–22).

In the narrative, the *Benedictus* expresses Zechariah's praise and answers the question in 1:66 ("what then will this child be"). Zechariah is not the same kind of ideal figure as Mary. He is righteous but he also displays disbelief for which he is punished. His prophecy is on the salvation of God through Jesus, interwoven with prophetic words concerning John. In this way it follows the general parallelism between Jesus and John

[58] The religious act is inseparable from the form. It is linguistically constituted.
[59] For tables of OT usage see Creed 1930, 305f; Brown 1993, 386f.

which can be observed in the whole infancy narrative.[60] Interestingly, this parallelism also shows up in the prayer-material. John taught his disciples prayer, and so did Jesus (11:1f). The passage concerns Zechariah's personal life, with the miraculous birth and the reversal of his muteness. At the same time it refers to the act of salvation now begun, a "visitation" by God (v. 68).[61] This language displays the common distinction between the earth as the abode of humans and God's abode outside it, in heaven.[62] Yet, God does indeed come to earth, above all to save his people. This is a basic presupposition of Lucan prayer.

The passage provides more direct characterisation of Jesus than that provided in the *Magnificat*. In both passages the focus is on God as Saviour, with Jesus tentatively presented as his definitive agent. There is an ambiguity towards the end of the song which hints at what is to come. In v. 68, God is the "Lord" (κύριος). However, in v. 76, there is again mention of the "Lord," but this time it is not clear whether this refers to God or to Jesus.[63] It is clear that John is paralleled, and succeeded, by Jesus when he goes out to prepare the way of the "Lord" (3:4; 7:27). In v. 43 it is Jesus who might be seen as the Lord. It is not until Acts that "Lord" is used in an unqualified manner for Jesus.[64] At the stoning of Stephen, Jesus is the recipient of Stephen's prayer, being called "Lord" (κύριε Ἰησοῦ Acts 7:59).[65] For the implied reader (Theophilus) the reference is clear enough.

A central part of the salvation God has raised up (vv. 69–70), is the enablement to serve God in "holiness" and "righteousness" (v. 75 ἐν ὁσιότητι καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ).[66] This continues the theme of servanthood evident in Mary's prayer. The utterance might be taken to indicate that the recipients of salvation will continue doing what has always been done but now in the land without fear. However, it seems more plausible in the light of

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[60] Cf. George 1970.

[61] Cf. Is 64:1; Gen 50:24–25; Ex 3:16; 4:31; 13:19; 30:12; Is 23:17; Ps 80:15; 106:4; Ruth 1:6. For discussions of a "visitiation of God" in later Judaism cf. Schweizer 1984, 42; Bovon 2002, 72.

[62] Cf. the *Shemone Esre* 18. Cf. Evans 1990, 178.

[63] Fitzmyer and Marshall argue that it is Jesus. Marshall 1978, 93; Fitzmyer 1981, 385–86.

[64] Cf. Kavin Rowe on the overlap of the use of the title 'Lord' in Luke. Rowe 2006, 197–218. Cf. also Bock 1987, 73–74; Bock 1994, 189.

[65] In Luke the instances of people asking Jesus to perform miracles should probably not be seen as prayers. Cf. 5:12; 7:6. It is after the resurrection that Jesus takes on a more exalted role.

[66] There is no principal verb between v. 71 and v. 75. The "salvation" mentioned in v. 71 consists in the aspects listed in the following verses, concluded by the possibility to serve God in a new manner (vv. 74–75).

vv. 76–79 that some sort of change in the human character is implied (cf. exegesis of 11:2; 18:9–14; 22:39–46. Cf. Is 29; Ez 36:22–38). This salvation is here not seen as a passive state or a change of an abstract essence. Salvation's goal is defined by the active verb "to serve." That God is the effectual agent of this salvation is clear from v. 69, "he has raised up a mighty saviour." Further, v. 77 should be read as an indication that salvation comes through the "remission" (ἀφέσει) of sins.[67] Knowledge of salvation comes through God's forgiveness of sins.[68] The active role of God is even more explicit in v. 79 where he will lead on the *way* of peace (cf. 3:4; Acts 2:28; 9:2; 19:23; 24:22). In the prayer this process is portrayed as a reciprocal relationship where both parts of the covenant have parts to play.

2:29–32, 36–38 The Nunc Dimittis *and Speech of Anna*

In these passages, Jesus is given further characterisation through the speech of two righteous characters. In similar fashion to the passages above these scenes contribute to the general picture of piety.[69] The "now" of v. 29 and the sensory language of v. 30 indicate that salvation is available. God the Saviour (1:47) acts for the world (v. 32) and the individual (v. 29) in Jesus, who is presented as personified salvation (τὸ σωτήριόν σου v. 30).[70] He is the universal saviour (φῶς εἰς ἀποκάλυψιν ἐθνῶν) and the restorer of Israel (cf. "light to the Gentiles" Gen 12:3).[71] This salvation historical direction towards the gentiles is further established in the prayer in Acts 10:1–20, 46.[72]

The way Simeon is characterised further establishes the ideals already seen in Zechariah, Elisabeth, and Mary. He is "righteous" and "devout" (v. 25 δίκαιος and εὐλαβής). In the *Nunc Dimittis* (v. 29), Simeon designates himself as Mary had done earlier (1:38) in an epithet that designates a man of righteousness; he is a servant (δοῦλος).[73] This characterisation is a rhetorical counterpart to the later use of "master" for God (δεσπότης).[74]

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[67] Marshall 1978, 93; Schürmann 1969, 91. As in the NRSV.

[68] Cf. Ringgren 1963, 120–125. For further support cf. also Schürmann 1969, 91; Bock 1994, 191. Cf. Jer 31:34; 33:8; Acts 5:31; 1QH 9:32–36.

[69] To Bovon vv. 29–32 are "really a prayer." Bovon 2002, 102.

[70] Schneider 1977, 71–72; Bovon 2002, 102.

[71] Cf. Is 40:1; Is 49:6; 61:2.

[72] Robinson 1964, 43. This could be an apologetic trait.

[73] Marshall 1978, 120; Rengstorf *TDNT* 2:273. cf. Ps 27:9; 2 Chr 6:23; Dan 3:33, 44; Acts 4:28.

[74] In Classical and Hellenistic Greek works, the word is used for gods. Cf. Fischer 1958–1959, 132–138; Rengstorf *TDNT* 2:44–49. Cf. (LXX) Prov 29:25; Is 1:24; Jonah 4:3; Acts 4:24; Rev 6:10. It is used of Christ in 2 Pet 2:1 and Jude 4.

Again, servanthood and humility are brought to the fore. The reference to Simeon's 'inspiration' is central to the later development of prayer (v. 27). He is intimately attuned to the Holy Spirit who leads him to go to the Temple and share a revelation (vv. 26–27).[75] To Luke, the Spirit is the power behind inspired speech (cf. 10:21–22).

The character of Jesus is further developed through a prophecy from Anna. She also displays an ideal piety and concludes the emphasis on servanthood obvious in all the passages reviewed. Mary is a servant (1:48), Israel is a servant (1:54–55), the people will be able to serve God (1:74), Simeon is a servant (2:29). Anna is above them all, she never leaves (2:37 οὐκ ἀφίστατο) the Temple and serves God day and night (2:37). The way she serves is "in prayer" (δεήσεσιν λατρεύουσα). This certainly imbues her speech with authority, and at the same time points to the important place of prayer in Luke. The same kind of attitude is later found in Jesus praying through the night (6:12), and the call for perseverance in prayer (11:5–8; 18:1–8). It could also be argued that, in similarity to Simeon, her knowledge of salvation history is an outcome of her communion with God.[76]

Narrative Progression: Infancy Narrative

The infancy narrative introduces Jesus as the highpoint of an implicit narrative of God and his people. Central is the covenantal understanding of the relation to God. The main way an ideal piety is constructed is through the use of OT traditions which are seen as fulfilled in Jesus. A number of OT types are alluded to and a covenantal picture of God furthered. The early characters of the infancy narrative display an ideal piety and constitute the "real Israel." The later references to the elders, chief priests and scribes only act as a contrast (22:66). In matters of piety there is a direct continuity between those who are before Jesus and those after him. Especially the Temple reference relates to a religious heritage, with its authentic relationship to God.[77] In Luke there is a smooth progression from faithful Israel into a church which also includes gentiles. The later followers of Jesus pray to the God of Israel, like the pious characters of the infancy narrative. This is a clear response-inviting structure; when they pray the audience are part of the same narrative as that recounted in the Gospel.

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[75] Cf. Bovon 2002, 101.
[76] So Fitzmyer 1981, 244.
[77] Holmås 2005, 416. Cf. Acts 3:1.

The characters of the infancy narrative represent ideal responses to the work of God in Jesus (Lk 1:47; 1:71, 77; 2:30–32). They are true servants of God. The characters interact with God according to the pattern laid out by the covenant with Abraham; now with a culmination in Jesus. However, in order to understand Jesus, one must be inspired by the Holy Spirit like Zechariah and Simeon. The construction is both apologetical and response-inviting, apart from the Holy Spirit there is no revelation of Jesus. The disciples do not truly recognise Jesus until they worship him in 24:52 (καὶ αὐτοὶ προσκυνήσαντες αὐτόν), and more fully at the outpouring of the Spirit (Acts 2). As will be seen below, Luke's connection of the Spirit to revelation and salvation also has wide-ranging implications for his presentation of prayer.

Early Ministry Narrative 3:1–9:50

The infancy narrative introduced the character of Jesus and evoked a set of expectations in the implied audience (3:15–17). The early ministry section develops that initial picture and begins the narrative of Jesus' acts. That narrative is ushered forward by the narrative interrogation about Jesus (5:21, 30, 33; 6:2, 11; 7:29–30, 39, 49; 8:25; 9:9, 18–20). Answers are found mainly at the baptism (3.21–22), the transfiguration (9:28–36), and at the synagogue of Nazareth (4:16–21). It can be observed that the two former scenes are prayer experiences. The third is implicitly concerned with prayer, as the synagogue is a 'house of prayer.'[78] The infancy narrative situated the Gospel in the piety of Second Temple Judaism. Here the material on piety, including prayer, is used to directly provide characterisation of Jesus. From chapter 3 and until after the resurrection Jesus is the only character actively engaging in prayer within the narrative.

3:21–22 Baptism

It has often been noted that Luke uses prayer as a marker of salvation history by including it in central passages. One such example is the baptism scene.[79] The baptism and the subsequent giving of the Spirit take place in prayer, already portrayed as an appropriate context for receiving

[78] Le Déaut 1975, 68.

[79] The scene is central in discussions of the historical Jesus. Cf. Käsemann 1969, 112. Cf. Stein on the options of 'why' Jesus is presented as accepting baptism for sins. Stein 1992, 139. Cf. Lk 23:40–41.

revelation.[80] The syntax implies that the descent of the Spirit is not only administered in response to the baptism, but depends just as much on the prayer. The use of a present participle "praying" (προσευχομένου) after the aorist infinitive of "baptised" (βαπτισθῆναι) and following the the aorist participle (βαπτισθέντος) implies that the descent of the Spirit occurred during the prayer following the baptism.[81] Some would even go so far as to say that the giving of the Spirit was an answer to prayer.[82] As Jesus has already been generated by the Holy Spirit (1:35), this suggestion must be qualified. It should be inferred on the basis of v. 23 that the scene is intended as the introduction to Jesus' ministry proper. Still, the thought that the Spirit is given in answer to prayer is found at other places (11:13). In this context, the prayer with the subsequent descent of the Spirit might be read as a type for the later experience of the community (as the Baptism is in Mk 1:9). As in other passages, Jesus is both presented as unique and as an example to emulate.

The characterisation of Jesus as a pray-er is important to the Lucan Christology. Jesus not only accepts but actively directs God's salvation history in prayer. Kinship language is used in the direct address "beloved Son" (cf. 1:32; 35; 2:11), which displays a dialogical ideal.[83] The characters of God and Jesus are developed in tandem.[84] As will be shown, Luke presents prayer as a central aspect of this unique relationship.[85] The prayer material is explicitly used to emphasise and develop Jesus' relationship to God.

As regards the spatial language, it can be observed that Luke claims that the descent of the Spirit was a public occurrence.[86] Luke often stresses the physical reality of experiences which might otherwise be taken as visions (cf. 1:13; 24:41, 50–53; Acts 1:9–11; 2:2–4; 10:41).[87] This could be thought

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[80] Marshall 1978, 150. To Johnson it is a "prayer experience." Johnson 1991, 69.

[81] Some see in this a drive to disassociate Jesus from John the Baptist. Cf. Creed 1930, 57; Bovon 2002, 128.

[82] Sabbe 1967, 207–208.

[83] So Koet 1999, 751. Marshall sees it as an Isaac typology. Marshall 1978, 155. Cf. Gn 22:2, 12, 16; Rom 8:32. T. Levi 18. Lövestam relates the scene to the messianic Ps 2:7 and Is. 42:1. Lövestam 1963, 95.

[84] Cf. Bovon 2002, 129.

[85] A unique "filial relationship." So Schürmann 1969, 191. Cf. also Cullmann 1963, 66–67; Bovon 2002, 130.

[86] Mark is more ambiguous. Cf. Johnson 1991, 71.

[87] With considerable caution I follow Kittel who contrasts the use of visionary language in the Bible to the more dualistic understanding found in Greek Philosophy and Hellenism. Kittel *TDNT* 5:346. For the בת קול cf. Dunn 1970, 27; Marshall 1978, 154.

to agree with the intention of providing an "eyewitness" (αὐτόπτης 1:2). Experiences like this are consistently set out as a rationale behind Jesus' ministry.[88] The references to the 'physical' reality of divine acts, and the 'physical' implications of prayer are maintained throughout.

5:16 Jesus Alone at Prayer I

In the midst of a string of miracle scenes, Jesus is portrayed alone at prayer. The placing, in between two miracle stories (5:12–26), suggests that there is a wish to emphasise that God is the force behind the miracles.[89] The setting in the "wilderness" (ἔρημος) brings to mind Jesus' temptation in the wilderness (4:1–13; cf. 8:26), and also John the Baptist who worked in that setting (3:2, 4). As an image it is not only negative; Israel was sustained in the wilderness.[90] Here the main point is to leave Jesus alone with God; the disciples are not present with him at this stage. Yet this is the start of a very important narrative progression in which the disciples are gradually led into Jesus' prayer-life.

Luke does not mention prayer in 4:42, although that situation hints at a prayer time (dif Mk 1:35). This suggests that Luke uses the theme of prayer with a particular intention, not merely referring to it whenever possible. However, this does not mean that prayer is only a marker of salvation history in Luke. There are examples of that but Luke also presents prayer as a repeated act apart from clear turning points in the narrative (like in 6:12–13; 9:18; 22:39). In 5:16 the grammar suggests that prayer was something Jesus regularly engaged in (two participles follows ἦν to express iterative action "he would *often* withdraw to pray").[91] In Luke prayer as such is basic to the character of Jesus, and hence to Christology. In this light, the prayers at the turning points of the narrative should be thought of as an extension of his normal communion with the Father. This information is not immediately available to the characters of the narrative. It is the 'implied reader' Theophilus, and with him the audience who know the full picture and follow the authorial point of view.

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[88] Jeremias 1971, 55; Goppelt 1975, 93.

[89] Feldkämper 1978, 81. It is not primarily a preparation for the controversy to come. Pace Danker 1988, 120; Bock 1994, 478.

[90] Cf. also Lk 1:80 7:42; Is 40:3 and Ez 36:33–38.

[91] Johnson 1991, 93. Fitzmyer 1981, 575.

5:33 Fasting and Prayer at the Bridegroom's Absence

This passage sets out an ideal piety by way of contrastive characterisation, and in the description of a piety connected to the person of Jesus. As regards the first aspect, it can be observed that the Pharisees (introduced in 5:21), and also the disciples of John the Baptist, are used as foils for Jesus' own teaching. The positive picture of pious Jews in the infancy narrative is not a blanket description. In Luke, the early followers of Jesus are connected only to certain parts of Judaism, those deemed pious and righteous. The charge brought against the disciples in this scene is that their religious practice is different than that of recognised groups in Jewish society. The teaching of Jesus, their master (ἐπιστάτα 5:5), sets him apart and makes them a distinct group within Judaism. In this context it can be observed that the passage points forward to 11:1 which distinguishes Jesus' prayer-teaching as different than that of John. Verse 5:33 implies that John taught his disciples to use specific phrases.

In this passage, Jesus is presented as "the bridegroom" (vv. 34–35).[92] That the piety of the disciples is somehow directed towards Jesus sets them apart from all other groups of Judaism. This is the case both in his particular instruction and in the understanding of the nature of his person. 'Bridegroom' provides a metaphor for the connection between Jesus and his followers. Like the usage of 'Father,' it is a way of representing the relationship in self-involving personal terms. (The symbolism might find resonance in the OT tradition of the people as the bride of God, Hos 1–3; cf. Is 5:1; 54:4; Ez 16:15–63; 23:1–49.) It is even such that his absence necessitates a certain religious act, that of fasting.[93] In the answer to the Pharisees, Jesus does not mention prayer as such, but the act should probably be inferred from the question directed at him (fasting can be seen as an intense form of prayer). The focus is on fasting, a form of self-denial. As will be seen later self-denial takes a role in the development of the ideal pray-er in so far as it is connected to a paradigmatic understanding of the cross (cf. 9:24).

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92 For historical background cf. Fitzmyer 1981, 599.

93 Cf. further Lk 2:37; 4:2; Acts 13:2; 14:23. The period between the passion 22:48 and the final coming of the Son of Man seem to be implied Lk 12:40; 17:22–37; 21:27, 36.

6:12–13 Jesus Alone at Prayer II

This picture of Jesus alone at prayer repeats the scene in 5:16.[94] Jesus leaves his ministry before the people and goes to the mountain in order to pray (ἐγένετο aor. followed by ἐξελθεῖν inf. followed by προσεύξασθαι final inf.).[95] This passage is the first mention of mountains and prayer in Luke, a combination that will become familiar (9:28; 19:29; 21:37; 22:39). In the OT it is often on mountains that God's presence is manifested (cf. Horeb: Ex 3:1–4:17; 18:5; 19:3–13; 24:13; Deut 1:6; Zion: Ps 48:1; 68:16; 99:2; Is 2:3; 40:9).[96] Although the Temple is central to Luke's argument at times the Gospel points beyond it to older theophanic settings (such as the genealogy going back to Adam 3:38). The result of Jesus' prayer is an event in salvation history, the choosing of the apostles (in Luke their calling is explicitly directed by God). This is seen in Acts, where the choosing is explicitly attributed to the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 1:2; Jn 17:6). It is further used as a paradigm in Acts where the Church at Antioch prays before appointing co-workers (13:2–3; 14:23).[97]

Despite the positive characterisation of the chosen twelve, the scene gives a picture of the disciples as being separated from Jesus' prayer-life. At this stage, Jesus is alone with God; he had to gather the disciples in the morning. However, after they have been called by Jesus in this scene, they begin to be included in his life of prayer. Luke constructs this progression carefully. After Jesus has called the twelve through the Holy Spirit they are able to receive further revelation concerning his communion with God.

6:28 Prayer for Enemies

At this point (6:20), Luke includes the first sermon of the Gospel. The material is similar to that in Matthew 5:17–48 and much of the exegesis of the Matthean parallel passages is directly applicable here (cf. the exegesis of Mt 5:44). However, the outline of the two sermons, and indeed Gospels, suggest that different dynamics are at work. Luke does not use the stronger antithesis format found in Matthew (in accordance with his smoother salvation historical progression). The introduction to the mate-

[94] The source critical questions are difficult (Mk 3:7–12//Lk 6:13–19 and Mk 3:13–19// Lk 6:12–16).

[95] "Prayer of God" v. 12 (ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ τοῦ θεοῦ) probably means "in the beseeching of God."

[96] Schürmann sees it as a Moses motif. Schürmann 1969, 313. An argument contested by Fitzmyer 1981, 616. Cf. the exegesis of Lk 9:28–36.

[97] In Luke-Acts, Jesus is made a model for the early community. So Tannehill 1986.

rial is a simple "to those who listen I say:…" (6:27). Matthew seems to have lumped together material, whereas Luke spreads it out. In the case of the Our Father, Matthew uses it in this sermon whereas Luke saves it for a later occasion. This shows how the ideal pray-er is constructed differently in the two Gospels. In Matthew the ideal emerges as an effect of the speeches and teaching of Jesus; in Luke the narrative development of the characters is brought more to the fore.

In Luke, as in Matthew, the follower of Jesus is called to pray in the face of opposition. Read in the immediate context (vv. 27 and 29), the term "abuse" (ἐπηρεάζω v. 28) suggests that the enemies ostracise and physically persecute the disciples. This can be hypothetical opposition, but opposition has already been mentioned in the narrative (4:16–30; 5:21; 5:33–39; 6:1–11). The disciples (v. 20) are to meet this situation in a way that reverses the relationships to the perpetrators by blessing (εὐλογεῖτε) and praying (προσεύχεσθε) for them.[98] Prayer is thought to reproduce God's posture of kindness (χρηστός v. 35) and mercifulness (οἰκτίρμονες v. 36 dif. Mt "be perfect"). This leads to the pray-ers being "sons of the most high" (v. 35). Luke could even be thought to present it as a "reward" (μισθός v. 35). Implicit is the thought that when the disciples identify with the Father and his purposes they become (ἔσεσθε fut v. 35) his children. Still, the main idea of the rhetoric is not what the disciples must do, but God's grace. The merciful character of God is the ideal the followers of Jesus are expected to conform to. God is merciful, and so are his children. In 16:8 there is an implicit reference to the disciples as "children of the light." In the Gospel the disciples are shown to eventually leave Jesus in Gethsemane. They are unable to follow him and his teaching. Yet to Luke, the mercy of God is extended to them as well. After the saving work of Jesus, they can begin to truly follow him (so Acts; similar logic is found in Rom 5:8). This passage construes discipleship as a new existence originating in the character of God the Father (cf. again v. 35 ἔσεσθε).

In more abstract terms it could be said that evil is somehow woven into the fabric of the story; the story needs its antagonists. The depersonalising acts ("those who strike, those who take away") of the opponents open the possibility of a new relation to God. This is interesting in light of Luke's emphasis on the weak and downtrodden. In Luke prayer is

98 Cf. Rom 12:14; 1 Cor 4:12; 1 Pet 3:9. It has been argued that there are no Jewish antecedents to this thought. So Lapide 1973, 369–372; Marshall 1978, 259. Contested by Piper 1979. For possible examples cf. 1Qap Gen 20:28; *Let. Aris* 227; 2 *Enoch* 50:3; *Jos. Asen* 23:9; 28:14; 29:3; Philo *Virt*. 116–18; *T. Benj* 4:2–3; *T. Jos* 18:2; *T. Gad* 6:4–7.

used as a way of subverting the repression and maintaining the worth of the followers of Jesus. In this manner, prayer is presented as an answer to the theodicy of being opposed by "evil sinners." In one sense it could be seen as a negative acceptance of transcendence. Jesus seems to be presented as an example to be followed in this respect. His enemies rejected and killed him. Yet, at the moment of death, he prays for them (23:34). Within the logic of the narrative, there must be a mechanism in place to enable the loosing of one's life in order to gain it (9:24).

9:16 Feeding of the Five Thousand

In this scene the aspects relevant to our study are the reference to Jesus' gaze to heaven, the blessing of the bread and the similarities to the language of the Last Supper. Matthew and Mark put more emphasis on the scene by including two versions (cf. the exegesis of Mk. 6:41; 8:6 and Mt 14:19 and 15:36.). In Luke the scene is not one where Jesus confronts evil directly in a combative miracle as he could be thought to do in Mark; there is not even a direct mention of the crowd's hunger. Rather, the effect of the scene is to draw attention to a way in which Jesus fulfils certain promises of old (God feeding his people Is 25:6; 65:13–14; Ps 78:19; 81:16). In this Jesus is characterised as God's powerful agent. The look to heaven should be understood as a prayer pointing to Jesus' intimate communion with God.[99] To Luke, Jesus acts with authority, in interaction with God.[100] The "blessing" characterises Jesus as a praying Jewish male (cf. the similar presentation of Paul in Acts 27:35, cf. m. Ber 6:1).

As in Matthew and Mark the language clearly prefigures that of the Last Supper.[101] Although the match is not complete, it seems beyond doubt that the scene was somehow seen as interpretative of the later rite of the Lord's table (1 Cor 11:20 κυριακὸν δεῖπνον).[102] In this the scene can be said to be a narrative anticipation of the Last Supper.[103] The verb used is usually expressed towards God as "blessing" (εὐλογέω cf. Mk 6:41). In Mk 8:7, 1 Cor 10:16 and here in Lk 9:16 the verb takes an object, which

[99] Cf. 18:13; Mk 7:34; Jn 11:41; Gen 15:5; Deut 4:19; Job 22:26; 2 Macc 7:28; Philo, Vita 66. D adds προσηυξατο και before ευλογησεν. Creed sees this reading as original. Creed 1930, 129.

[100] Cf. the later Berakot 6:1.

[101] Fitzmyer sees the words as "reflections of the early eucharistic liturgies." Fitzmyer 1981, 768.

[102] However, the differences must be maintained: no Passover setting, different recipients, multiplication, fish, no interpretative comments. Marshall 1978, 361–362.

[103] So Johnson 1991, 146.

could suggest a consecration.[104] This is hard to argue for in a Jewish meal setting, but the imprecision might have been intentional.[105] The language is not clear; did Jesus take the five bread and the two fish at the same time? Did he break them, including the fish? The ambiguity suggests that more than a straight narrative description is at play.

9:18 Jesus Alone at Prayer III

The early narrative interrogation on who Jesus is reaches its highpoint in the question of Herod in 9:9 ("I beheaded John. Who, then, is this I hear such things about?"). In the *anagnorisis* scene starting in 9:18 it gets a provisional answer.[106] Jesus is the "Christ of God" (v. 20). Luke appropriately introduces the scene with a reference to prayer. The scene of prayer follows immediately upon the revelatory feeding miracle. It has been argued that the recognition of Jesus' nature was a result of his prayer.[107] It is true that after Jesus' prayer Peter sees the truth about Jesus, a distinct event in salvation history. That Jesus is presented as praying for his followers is not improbable in Luke (6:12; 22:31–32; 23:34). However, that Jesus prays explicitly for revelation to the disciples cannot be explicitly deduced from the text.

In addition to providing characterisation of Jesus, the scene also continues the progressive development of an ideal pray-er. Twice Jesus has been depicted as praying alone. Now he is also praying "alone" (κατὰ μόνας), but this time the disciples are with him (συνῆσαν). Earlier the reference to Jesus' prayer only served to set him apart from the other characters of the narrative. He is unique, and was alone with God at prayer. However, now the disciples are partially included in the act. They follow and are allowed to observe their teacher in this as well. In this, they progress in their discipleship and receive revelation on an important aspect of the character of Jesus. They are with him alone. The audience naturally follows the disciples in this scene, especially as the rebuke seen in the other Synoptics is left out (compare Mk 8:33; Mt 16:23). The result is that Luke's narrative progression contains less tension than that of the other two Synoptics.[108]

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[104] Argued by Schürmann 1969, 517.

[105] Marshall sees it as an accusative of respect, a thanks *for* the bread. Marshall 1978, 361.

[106] ἀναγνόρισις is a "moment of recognition." Cf. Nuttal 1978, 8.

[107] Crump 1992, 21–34.

[108] The same can be said of Luke's so-called 'big omission' of Mk 6:45–8:26.

9:28–36 Transfiguration

At the transfiguration, the early characterisation of God's Messiah reaches a highpoint. Here the question of Herod in 9:9 is more conclusively answered.[109] In Luke this happens in a prayer scene. The narrative interrogation receives an answer in Peter's confession and is here taken a step further.[110] The omission of Peter's rebuke of Jesus avoids the awkwardness of the other Synoptics and makes for an easier progression. In Luke the story line moves from the confession of Jesus in 9:18–22 directly into another revelation of Jesus' character. The scene opens for the pivot in 9:51 by establishing Jesus' divine authority and directing him towards Jerusalem (ἔξοδος in v. 31 is analogous to ἀνάλημψις in v. 51). Jesus is presented as unique and different both from his disciples and from representative OT characters. As far as piety is concerned, this uniqueness is later made more explicit in the worship of Jesus, and in prayers directed to him.

Two typical OT figures are used to develop the character of Jesus, who has a decisive place in God's plan.[111] Moses and Elijah can be seen as representatives of the Law and of the Prophets, and could be thought to be examples of an ideal piety.[112] That they interact with Jesus points to a continuity between the age of promise and the age of fulfilment. Differentiation vis-à-vis Moses is found throughout the Gospels, especially in the controversy scenes. A number of parallels to the mountain scene in Ex 24 are evident.[113] In fact, the transfiguration is the prayer-passage of the Gospels that uses the highest concentration of Moses traditions.[114] Still, Jesus is not directly paralleled to these figures, not even to Moses in his role as intercessor.[115] The glory mentioned belongs to Jesus properly, whereas

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[109] Darr 1998, 169.

[110] Luke's differences from Mark are most probably a result of different sources. So Blinzer 1937, 57–62; Rengstorf 1937, 121; Dabrowski 1939, 21; Schramm 1971, 136–139; Dietrich 1972, 104–109; Marshall 1978, 381.

[111] So Tannehill 1986, 224.

[112] So Schneider 1977, 216. Perhaps also representing the living and the dead. Cf. 2 Kg 2:11, Elijah did not die.

[113] The use of ἀναβαίνω instead of ἀναφέρω indicates that Luke wishes to connect to the Sinai narrative in which it is a main word (Ex 24: 1, 9, 12, 15, 18; 32:30; 33:1; 34: 1, 3, 4). Cf. The mountain, the three companions, being covered by a cloud, the voice from the cloud, the shining face. (Ex 34:29 cf. 2 Cor 3:7, 13). Cf. further 4 Ezra 7:97; 1 Enoch 38:4; 39:7; 2 Baruch 51:10.

[114] Minear 1976, 110; Johnson 1991, 18–20; Reid 1993, 103.

[115] Koet makes this assertion a major point of the scene. Koet 1999, 753. On Moses as intercessor cf. Widmer 2004.

for Moses it is external and merely reflected on him (cf. v. 32 τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ).[116] The interaction of Jesus with Moses and Elijah is followed by a direct address where God characterises Jesus as "his Son, his Chosen One." After the address Jesus is found alone (v. 36 μόνος). The result is that the characterisation of Jesus is based on these earlier figures, but is placed in a category of its own. In a unique way Jesus is the Son.[117]

The uniqueness of Jesus is part of Luke's presentation of his communion with God. The fact that Jesus' nature is suddenly changed is an example of how Luke sets him apart from his disciples (cf. v. 30 καὶ ἰδού). The scene uses descriptions common in mystical revelations of the divine sphere. Jesus is shining (v. 29) and has his own glory (v. 32 cf. Is 42:8).[118] This is not presented as if Jesus had changed to something he was not before, rather it is a revelation of his true nature (in that sense his character is static).[119] In Luke, Jesus is not presented as someone progressing to the divine sphere. Jesus was generated by the Holy Spirit, and has already been addressed as God's Son at the baptism. It is Jesus' divine attributes which are revealed in this scene.

The spatial language and the physical description of what goes on are not immediately transparent.[120] In accordance with the emphasis elsewhere in the Gospel, the scene is physically visible. The disciples wanted to make "tabernacles" for those present. A cloud needs to shroud that which presumably should not be seen by the disciples (cf. the cloud of Ex 24:15). They "sleep" (βεβαρημένοι ὕπνῳ v. 32, a religious state implied?) but awake (διαρρηγορήσαντες) to see what occurred. The visible cloud is symbolic of God's hidden presence (Ps 18:11; Ex 19:16).[121] It is in this spatial context that the reference to Jesus' change of appearance must be placed. In Luke, the Creator is at times present in ways visible to his creation.[122] It is in this spatial context that the Lucan prayer theology must be placed.

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[116] Fitzmyer 1981, 799.

[117] Williams 2002, 24–25.

[118] Stein has given a convincing rebuttal of Bultmann who sees this as a misplaced resurrection story. Stein 1976, 79–76. The scene functions well within Luke when the infancy narrative is included.

[119] So Clément 1959, 97–112. In the Orthodox tradition Jesus is here a sign of a transfigured cosmos. In the same vein cf. also Williams 2003, 27.

[120] For discussions of the multifarious ways the scene has been understood cf. Fitzmyer 1981, 795–796; Bovon 2002, 371; Junod 1982, 39; Fossum 1995, 71–94.

[121] So Bovon 2002, 378.

[122] Luke often uses sensory verbs with a *double entendre* to designate spiritual insight and physically seeing that spiritual reality. So Crump 1992, 36.

The reference to prayer in this scene is not found in the other Gospels, but it is decisive in Luke. Jesus ascends the mountain "in order" to pray (προσεύξασθαι final infinitive v. 28). To drive home the point Luke repeats that it was *in prayer* that Jesus' face changed or "became other" (v. 29 ἐν τῷ προσεύχεσθαι). Prayer plays a central part in Luke's Christology. Jesus is a Son with intimate communion with the Father, being addressed directly by him.[123] In this context the references should not be seen simply as the introduction of an exemplary piety at well-chosen places in the narrative. Rather, the references to prayer are constitutive of the picture of Jesus. In Luke, Jesus is a pray-er and this reveals something important about his "nature." It is also in response to prayer that the Father is shown to speak audibly to and of his Son (3:22; 9:35), adding to the dialogical picture of prayer.

Can Jesus in any way be understood to represent a paradigm in this scene? Yes, in the general sense of always praying. Moreover, in other places in the NT there are thoughts of a glory shared with Christ (cf. for instance Jn 17:22 and Rom 8:17). In Luke's transfiguration scene the glory belongs to Jesus. Yet, the post-resurrection existence of the believers is different. They are given the divine Spirit, with accompanying 'light-effects' (Acts 2:1–13). In this context it is worth mentioning the reference to being "transfigured" in 2 Cor 3:18. There the believer in Jesus can behold the glory unveiled and be "transformed" by its intruding effects (μεταμορφούμεθα echoing the Marcan transfiguration). One direction that such thoughts took is evident in 2 Peter (cf. v. 18). The letter speaks of the glory which belongs to Jesus (1:3 ἰδίᾳ δόξῃ). In the next verse it says that the "believers in Jesus Christ" (v. 1) can receive the promises and become "sharers in divine nature" (1:4 γένησθε θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως). In Luke, Jesus is preparing for his "exodus" which is yet to come, the resurrection. The choice of imagery suggests that he is to bring someone with him like Moses had once done. To the implied audience Jesus is here representative of a new humanity who has experienced the outpouring of the Spirit and the resurrection, a proleptic picture of their future state.

The disciples are those who follow Jesus in his exodus. The foremost trait displayed by the three privileged disciples in this scene is that of incomprehension. Yet at the same time they are now allowed to observe Jesus' prayer-life. Jesus takes the initiative to bring them to the moun-

[123] Cf. Fitzmyer 1981, 793.

tain with him. The three of them witness the kind of communion which constitutes his character. A look at the context reveals that the scene is surrounded by texts that start to stake out the demands of discipleship (9:21–50). The passage preceding this one is a prediction of the passion (v. 22) coupled with the cross-bearing speech (vv. 23–27). Verses 43b–45 again predict the passion, vv. 46–48 ask who is the greatest, vv. 57–62 contain a discourse on following the Son of Man, and 10:1–12 presents the mission of the seventy-two. These sections are interspersed with two accounts of the failures of the disciples, which serve as contrasts to the ideal of Jesus' teaching (cf. vv. 37–43 on the inability of the disciples and vv. 51–55 where they call down fire). The resulting picture is a progress in discipleship wholly guided and enabled by Jesus. A revelation of Jesus' life of prayer is an important part of this. The way in which discipleship is tied to the person of Jesus, and to prayer, shows that discipleship is not merely concerned with moral necessity. At the mount of Transfiguration, Jesus is presented in intimate communion with God. The way this is done, with hints of the resurrection, suggests that the scene is a sign of what is to come also for his followers (the language is similar to Lk 24:4; Acts 1:10). The presence of God is thought to have a transforming effect.[124]

Narrative Progression: Early Ministry Narrative

The early ministry narrative proceeds with a gradual development of the character of Jesus. Narrative interrogation is used to describe Jesus 'the Saviour' from different angles. For our purposes it is important that, among other things, he is portrayed as a consistent pray-er (5:16, 6:12–13 and the language of the other prayer passages). Actually, prayer takes a central role in the narrative development of his character. The two major scenes of baptism and transfiguration are prayer-events. In both, Jesus is addressed as God's Son confirming his address of God as Father. They are the only two instances of God's direct address in the Gospel and point to a conceived communion between the two characters. Read together these early references make it clear that the theme of prayer is not only a marker of salvation historical events. Prayer is central to the character of Jesus, and thereby to the Lucan Christology.

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[124] Somewhat similar thoughts are displayed in Ezekiel the Tragedian (*Exagoge* 68–81) and Philo (*Mos* 1, 155–158) where Moses' interaction with God is expressed in terms of deification. Meeks 1968.

The uniqueness of the character of Jesus creates a distance between him and the other characters. Jesus is unique and the ignorance of the disciples and opponents serves to make the picture even clearer. Still, this narrative tension is used to draw the audience towards Jesus. In Luke, the ideal pray-er is developed mainly through the progression of the narrative. Jesus calls his followers to be like him (6:40; 46–49), and to follow him where he is going. From apparently having been left out of Jesus' prayer life, the disciples are gradually let into it. In the early scenes he prays alone, and the disciples search for him. Then before the confession in 9:20 Jesus takes disciples with him when he prays. At the transfiguration three disciples are allowed to follow him and witness the interaction he has with God and the heavenly realm. Still, at this stage the disciples can only observe.

Travel Narrative and Earlier Jerusalem Ministry 9:51–21:38

There is a distinct spatial and temporal marker in 9:51 which commences a new section of movement towards Jerusalem and the fulfilment of Jesus' ministry ("When the days drew near for him to be received up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem."). In one sense, the transfiguration scene serves as a narrative motivation for the new step in Jesus' ministry. The narrative takes the form of a journey in which the disciples follow Jesus where he is going (cf. the "way motif"). More than that, they are also shown doing the works of Jesus and imitating him (heeding the call in 6:40, 46–49). This presentation of discipleship brings to mind the figure of Theophilus who is to gain certainty as to the teaching he has received (1:4). The narrative recipient of the Gospel is a follower of Jesus who needs further instruction in the life he taught. The material on prayer in this section is primarily teaching where prayer is shown to be a major part of discipleship.[125] As Jesus and the disciples approach and enter Jerusalem the tension with the Pharisees and other leaders increases. Then there is less direct teaching on prayer as the character of Jesus receives singular focus.

10:2 Prayer Reference in the Missionary Discourse

A missionary discourse is found at the very start of the travel narrative. In light of the whole of Luke-Acts, it is clear that it is after Pentecost that the

[125] Holmås 2011, 120.

prayer is answered, then the disciples proceed more fully in their missionary activity (Acts 1:8; 13:47).[126] For our purposes it is the initial command to pray which is relevant. The word used for prayer in this verse is primarily used of petitionary prayer in Luke-Acts, so also here (δεήθητε 22:32, Acts 8:22, 24; 10:2). The ideal prayer is to further the plan of God through praying for the expansion of the community.

Jesus had prayed before choosing the twelve (6:12–13). Here the circle is expanded to include the seventy-two (v. 1).[127] These followers of Jesus are asked to do like Jesus and pray for more workers in the harvest. As already noted, this procedure is made a general principle in Acts (Acts 13:2–3; 14:23). The epithet "Lord of the harvest" (τοῦ κυρίου τοῦ θερισμοῦ) implies that God has a particular goal that he works towards. In the OT 'harvest' is often connected to judgment (Mic 4:11–13; Is 63:1–6; Jer 25:30–31; Joel 3:13) and also the eschatological gathering of Israel (Is 27:12–13), so also here. Arguably, Luke uses the term to point to the decisive nature of the present move of God in Jesus. Although God is in charge of the harvest he must be beseeched to "drive out" (ἐκβάλλω) workers to the harvest which stands in danger of being spoiled. Through this response-inviting construction the followers of Jesus are given an active and necessary part in the fulfilment of the plan of God. They are ushered on into this work by the claim that workers are in short supply and that the need for prayer is acute.

The disciples are expected to be labourers in the harvest, and to work even by praying for it. In prayer "the kingdom of God" (10:9) is furthered. This activity is thought to have a tangible result in salvation history. Therefore, Luke conceives of prayer as a direct participation in God's plans. This is clearly the case with the prayers of Jesus. According to this command, the prayers of his followers also have a role to play. In 10:16 the disciples act as representatives of Jesus. The result is that prayer is thought of as a dynamic activity beyond that of receiving insight into the plan of God. To Luke, pray-ers are not hired hands, but are seen as co-workers of God. The task envisaged also implies a time span in which God's plan is not fully realised but is in the process of being so.[128] This aspect of delay is used more explicitly for prayer in the parable found in 18:1–8.

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[126] So Matson 1996, 51.

[127] 'Two' is found in ℵ, A C L W Θ Ξ Ψ etc. It is not found in p75, B D 0181 etc. Gen 10 lists the nations of the world as seventy—MT, and seventy-two—LXX. This is the traditional number of the nations descending from Noah, and an image of the universal mission of the early community. Tannehill 1986, 232–237.

[128] Cf. Hahn 1965, 40.

10:21–22 The Cry of Jubilation

Not a petitionary prayer in the strict sense of the term; this utterance is comparable to the prayer-songs of the infancy narrative. Like in 1:67; 2:27 and 6:12–13, this passage also refers to the Holy Spirit inspiring the utterance (cf. also Lk 11:13; 24:49; Acts 1:8).[129] It also continues the tone of fulfilment already used in Luke (cf. in that hour, rejoiced, plan).[130] In that sense the language of the passage is more connected to the disciples than in the parallel passage in Matthew. In Luke, various characters praise God, thank him for promises fulfilled, and are filled with joy (1:64; 2:28, 38; 5:25–26; 7:16; 13:13; 17:15; 18:43; 19:37–38; 23:47; 24:53). The result of this Lucan language is that Luke has a stronger emphasis on present eschatology than Matthew. In that sense, the disciples can be thought to be closer to the prayer language of Jesus used in this scene. This agrees with the Lucan strategy of associating the disciples with Jesus in prayer. They are to follow him, and pray like he did. Therefore, the passage contributes more directly to an ideal pray-er as part of the progressive development of the theme of prayer than in the Matthean parallel.

This is not to suggest that Jesus is not presented as unique. The passage does prepare for the later devotion to Jesus. At the same time Luke argues that the uniqueness of Jesus is what enables a new relation to God. For Luke that relationship is patterned on the character of Jesus. Jesus reveals the Father and himself in interaction. The ideal followers of Jesus are those who receive that revelation. The disciples have already received part of that revelation, instigating the praise of Jesus. It is probably the presence of the kingdom and the success of the seventy which are implied.[131] "This" (ταῦτα and αὐτά) should hence be read as referring back to the revealing works of Jesus and his followers.[132] Further revelation is given as the disciples observe Jesus' communication with the Father. In this scene it is spoken for the benefit of those listening (as in Jn 11:42; 17:1–26).

The neat contrast provided between "revealed" (ἀπέκρυψας) and "hidden" (ἀπεκάλυψας) in v. 21 creates a distinct boundary between those who

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[129] There are several variants for the phrase about the Spirit: a) εν τω πνευματι τω αγιω ℵ D L Ξ 33. 1241 al it b) τω πνευματι τω αγιω p75 B C K Θ f^{1} 579. aur vg c) τω πνευματι A W Ψ f^{13} *M* f d) εν τω πνευματι p45vid 0115. 892. 2542 pc q; Cl. a) and b) have the strongest external evidence. c) has strong internal support (2:27; 4:1; Acts 19:21). d) this variant might imply that Jesus rejoiced in his own spirit. a)–c) give the same meaning: Jesus is filled with the spirit before uttering an important saying. This option is followed here.

[130] For "plan" εὐδοκία cf. Schrenk *TDNT* 2:747.

[131] So Nolland 1993, 571.

[132] Schürmann 1994, 105.

receive the revelation and those to whom it is hidden.[133] The "wise" and "those who know" are comparable to the string of opponents in the *Magnificat*.[134] The disciples can know what the kings and prophets did not (v. 24), a response-inviting move.[135] As in the Psalms, the praise itself invites the audience to join in.[136] The use of "infants" (or "simple one" νηπίοις) implies reliance upon "the Father."[137] This stresses the nature of revelation as a gift, and the necessity of humility for receiving it (cf. 4:16–30). The logic is set out already in the infancy narrative, where God is praised for lifting up the humble (ταπεινός). This is not only a descriptive but also a prescriptive utterance. It is those who are humble and receive (δέξηται subj. aor. of δέχομαι) the kingdom who will enter it (Lk 18:17). For the audience the saying cements their "insider" position.

The revelation that the disciples receive in this passage contributes to Luke's later description of the new reality accomplished in and through Jesus. The saying is presented as a reflection of Jesus' personal prayer life.[138] Now, for the first time in the narrative, concrete words of Jesus' interaction with the Father are included. Verse 21 contains the first address of God as "Father"; a designation invited by God who calls Jesus "Son" (Lk 3:21–22; 9:35). The passage continues the central use of prayer in the Lucan Christology. Jesus is presented as having a unique and reciprocal relationship with this Father.[139] He is the unqualified "Son."[140] This relationship is central in what Jesus reveals. Through the revelation given by the Holy Spirit, the prayer-utterance takes one more step towards including the disciples in that special relationship.[141]

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[133] Bovon points to a common apocalyptic prayer of thanks for God's revelation in contemporary Judaism. Bovon 1996, 69–70.

[134] Cf. also Lk 2:34; 4:16–30 Cf. Further Ps 119:30; 116:6; 19:7 LXX.

[135] In Matthew the contrast is between the disciples and their contemporaries, suggesting separate sources. Marshall 1978, 431.

[136] ἐξομολογοῦμαι indicates a piety based on LXX models (Ps 6:6; 9:2; 34:18; 44:18). Miyoshi 1974, 121; Fitzmyer 1985, 871–872.

[137] Cf. Nolland 1993, 572; Legasse 1969, 178.

[138] Cullmann 1995, 41.

[139] 10:22b is read. Cf. also Jn 3:35; 7:29; 10:14–15; 13:3; 17:2, 25, 29. For historical questions see the notes to Mt 11:24–25. Nolland points to Exod 33:12–13 as the background of this language. Nolland 1993, 575. Cf. further wisdom traditions like 1 QH 7:26; Jubilees 1:24. On this cf. also Hoffmann 1970, 270–271; Suggs 1970, 71–97.

[140] So Fitzmyer 1985, 896.

[141] To Bovon 10:21–22 is an "integration of the community into the father-son relationship." Bovon 2002, 130. Likewise Hamman 1971, 92; Tannehill 1986, 238.

The language of reciprocity is a claim that it is only Jesus who can reveal the Father (like knows like).[142] The Father is only available through the personal relationship between himself and Jesus. At this point, the piety of the infancy narrative is qualified. True piety and prayer are connected to Jesus, and therefore the community of his followers. When Jesus teaches on prayer he reveals the Father.[143] At the same time, the characterisation of Jesus is accomplished only by reference to the Father. The Son and Father can only be properly described in view of their relationship to each other.[144] The circle is opened in the revelation to the disciples. A revelation which is theirs in so far as they relate to Jesus. To Luke, true knowledge of God is only available in personal terms, and only through Jesus.

11:1–13 Jesus Teaches on Prayer

At this point in the narrative Luke includes an extended section on prayer. Luke has now brought the disciples to the point where they can proceed with a new form of prayer. This narrative development of the disciples and Jesus paradigmatic role explain the difference from the Matthean placing of the material. Only after Jesus has been solidly established as a figure of piety, and the disciples are ready to receive insight on this matter, do Jesus teach in more detail on this subject.[145] The differences from the Matthean version have been explained in different ways. Here the prayer and surrounding teachings will be expounded in light of their use in Luke. It can also be observed that the differentiation vis-à-vis John the Baptist continues (cf. 5:33; 11:1).[146] The section fits effortlessly into the narrative flow of Luke. The words introducing the section are almost a verbatim parallel to 9:18, connecting the teaching to Jesus' own prayer life.

Luke has fitted the teaching into a context which displays an 'ideal attitude' before God.[147] It comes shortly after Jesus' own prayer (10:21–22), his example of love (10:29–37), and the saying on hearing his words (10:38–42). To Luke it is after the revelation of Jesus and the Father (9:28; 10:21) that

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142 Holmås 2011, 99.

143 Holmås 2011, 100.

144 Cf. the ambiguity in the use of κύριος both for Jesus 10:1, 17, and in 10:21 for God. Cf. further Rowe on this. Rowe 2006, 137.

145 So also Homås 2011, 123–124.

146 Johnson sees the reference to John as an argument based on the special communication that prophets had with God. Johnson 1991, 179. Luke presents John's teaching as different than that of Jesus, without giving details.

147 Fitzmyer 1985, 896. In this it is comparable to Matthew with a setting of ideal righteousness.

the disciples can be taught to pray.[148] Now they can follow Jesus on his way. Jesus has been portrayed as a master (ἐπιστάτα 5:5; 8:24, 45; 9:33, 49) who leads his disciples through both teaching and example (cf. 6:40). After observing Jesus pray (9:18: 9:28–29), and being commanded to do so themselves (10:2), they finally ask him to teach them. This narrative progression draws the audience into the teaching as well. Jesus' prayer teaching is presented as a direct continuation of his own prayer-life.[149]

The introduction to the prayer (v. 2) stresses that this is *the* way to pray (ὅταν with pres. subj. προσεύχησθε, followed by impv λέγετε). As in Matthew the prayer can be seen as the direct speech of the ideal pray-er. The teaching is addressed to the insiders (τις τῶν μαθητῶν) and the "privileged" audience. The teaching material functions as direct addresses of the audience from within the narrative. It is not however presented as Jesus' own prayer. 4:1–13 implies that Jesus is victorious over "temptation" and does not need to pray for forgiveness. In Luke, Jesus prays *for* the disciples (22:31–32: 23:34) but nowhere does he join in prayer *with* the disciples.[150] The unity between himself and the disciples is construed on other grounds. In Luke, Jesus reveals the Father, partly through a revelation of their relationship (10:21). The teaching on prayer in 11:1–13 "reveals" the true nature of humans in relation to the Father.[151]

The address "Father" is the basis of the other petitions of the prayer (v. 2). To Luke it expresses the relationship Jesus has to God (10:21). That Jesus teaches his disciples to use "Father," his personal address for God (v. 2), implies that their respective relationships are related (cf. Mk 13:46; Mt 6:9; Rom 8:15; Eph 4:3). Luke perceives of Jesus' work of salvation as bringing about a new relationship to God. This relationship is most pointedly expressed in the prayer-address 'Father.'[152] Yet, the new relation depends on the complete work of salvation which, for Luke, includes the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus, as well as the outpouring of the Spirit.[153] In Luke the petition is used as an association with Jesus' relation

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148 Schürmann 1994, 178.

149 The demand for a teaching on piety is also a step in defining a distinct group centred on the person of Jesus.

150 Bornkamm 1975, 128.

151 "Das Vaterunser bringt Gott zum Ausdruck, um das Menschsein besser auszudrücken." Bovon 1996, 119.

152 On God as Father in Luke cf. Chen 2006.

153 Cf. Green 1995, 125; Holmås 2011, 130.

to his Father.[154] Through prayer the disciples are made to share in Jesus' own relation to the Father.[155] The utterance in itself designates a personified form of love, as appropriate to interhuman relationships.[156]

The petition "hallowed be your name" (ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου) entails that God's name is in one sense not properly hallowed at present.[157] It also implies that the sphere of men has the potential of becoming holy through God's act in answer to prayer.[158] The thought of holiness is fundamental to Israel's view of God and also to the existence God has called them to (Lev 11:45; 22:32; Is 5:16; Ez 20:41; 36:20; 38:23). In this context, there is reciprocity between the acts of God and those of men. God's holy character, his otherness, is what necessitates prayer.[159] Also, in Luke, the prayer for God's holiness is an acceptance of his character (as presented in the tradition), and a willingness to change in response to it. God works to sanctify his name, and the pray-er becomes a willing part of that action.[160] Altogether, the participation of the pray-er in God's work is more emphasised in Luke than in Matthew.

In the next petition, "your kingdom come" (ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου), the disciples are again tied to the coming of God's kingdom in prayer (cf. 10:2). The "Kingdom of God" is central to Luke (39 occurrences) and is primarily

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[154] Cf. the exegesis of Mk 14:36. In Luke the utterance is set in a Christological context.

[155] Schürmann 1994, 178–179.

[156] So Bovon 1996, 125.

[157] God's name refers to his person. Proksch *TDNT* 1:111.

[158] So Hamman 1971, 113. Cf. the variant "Your Holy Spirit come upon us and cleanse us" (ἐλθέτω το πνευμα σου το αγιον εφ ημασ και καθαρισατω ημας). It is found in (162) 700 (Mcion^{T}) GrNy. Scholars in favour of its authenticity: Harnack 1908, 63; Weiss and Bousset 1917, 465; Streeter 1936, 277; Lampe 1955, 170; Leaney 1956, 103–111; Grässer 1957, 109–111; Ott 1965, 112–120; Freudenberger 1968–69, 419–432. Scholars against its authenticity: Lohmeyer 1965, 261–70; Jeremias 1967, 83; Carmignac 1969, 89–91; Metzger 1971, 154; Marshall 1978, 458. Cf. also the conflation of D, commented on by Manson 1955, 105–106. If the passage is original Luke would have used a source different than Q, or redacted freely. Cf. Sheldon 1991, 94. Marcion uses it instead of "Hallowed be your name" and 162 uses it for "Your kingdom come." Some see it as an instance of a backward projection of early liturgy into the text. Lohmeyer 1965, 261–270; Carmignac 1969, 89–91. Jeremias relates that the sentence was an old baptismal prayer Jeremias 1967, 83–84. Barrett likewise looks to the experience of the Church. Barrett 1966, 46. The content is clearly Lucan. (Cf. Lk 1:35; 11:13; Acts 4:31; 10:15, 21; 11:18; 15:9). Altogether the external evidence dismisses authenticity. However, as an early interpretation it supports the understanding that prayer does effect something in the pray-er.

[159] Cf. the exegesis of Mt 6:9.

[160] As argues Manson 1949, 169; George 1953, 74; Carmignac 1969, 81–85; Cullmann 1995, 44; Karris 2000, 13–16.

found in the travel narrative with its focus on discipleship.[161] The use of the verb "come" (ἔρχομαι) implies that the prayer is for God's intervention and presence with the pray-ers. The petition should be read, as the previous one, as a reference to God's work which the pray-er shares in. The act of praying construes the pray-ers as subjects of God. The call for God's kingdom is not for an abstract state, but a call to be actively ruled by God.

Some have argued that in Luke the "kingdom of God" is now present in the act of prayer.[162] It is true that Luke focuses on the present reality of salvation.[163] Luke conscripts eschatology in the service of discipleship. However, even future events are included in God's plan of salvation (12:40; 17:22).[164] The kingdom is present as a foretaste of a reality to be made complete in the future. Present experience also seems to be necessary for prayer to refer.[165] Prayer without a connection to present experience would be meaningless from the vantage-point of the pray-er.[166] In Luke, prayer validates a certain experience of God, pursues "promises" and safeguards the relationship to the God who directs history (cf. exegesis of 11:5–8; 18:1–8). Prayer as a relation to God is thought to sustain the follower of Jesus even on the "day" (17:24, 24; 21:34). By this understanding prayer is the expression of a paradox or tension in the experience of the follower of Jesus.

As in Matthew the interpretation of the petition for bread (Lk 11:3) is hampered by the barely translatable word *epiousion* (ἐπιούσιον) which qualifies it. For those who see the context as 'spiritual,' the bread is thought to be future and eschatological.[167] Others read it as referring also to a physical necessity.[168] In general Luke emphasises the 'physical' aspects of his narrative. God is the saviour of all stages and areas of human life (cf. the

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[161] It is a development upon such OT motifs as God as king (Deut 9:26; 1 Sam 8:6–8; 12:12), the Messiah, the royal imagery in the Psalms, and Davidic kingship.

[162] Lohmeyer 1965, 88–110; Perrin 1967, 160. The eschatology is mixed as in Matthew. Cf. Carmignac 1969, 83–85. Schulz in contrast argues that the petition is only eschatological. Schulz 1972, 89.

[163] More so than Paul. So Green 1995, 127.

[164] A certain time will elapse before the coming of the Son of Man, which to Luke is Jesus himself. So Marshall 1978, 656–657.

[165] Cf. Plymale 1990, 543–544.

[166] If it only refers to an eschatological state, it is hard to avoid the objection that it is a form of ideal projection.

[167] A number of early church fathers followed this option cf. Talbert 1982, 129; Schneider 1977, 275; Carmignac 1969, 122–128.

[168] Followed by Cullmann 1995, 52.

infancy narrative). Jesus is portrayed with concern for a wide range of 'physical' aspects of life (5:33; 7:34; 24:43–44). He heals the sick (4:38–39; 5:12–13, 18–25; 6:6–10; 7:11–15; 8:2; 8:41–56), and miraculously supplies the physical need of food (5:1–11; 9:16–17; cf. *manna*, which is sufficient, but needs to be collected each day Ex 16:18; Pr 30:8). Also, the Lucan beatitudes are markedly more 'physical' than those in Matthew (6:20–22). That the bread came to symbolise the later Eucharist is a different issue. On this account there might be an intended ambiguity in the phrase. It might refer both to physical bread and the spiritual good which the 'bread of life' signifies (as in Mt 6:11).[169] God is thought to supply (δίδου pres impv) *all* needs of the pray-er "each day" (καθ' ἡμέραν cf. 19:47, Acts 17:11). The call not to worry about physical things (12:29–31) should be read in conjunction with this interpretation to the effect that prayer is the opposite of worrying. The ideal pray-er is in a situation of continual dependence upon God, for physical as well as spiritual aspects.

Verse 4 starts with a petition for forgiveness of sins. 'Sin' is a theme found throughout Luke, and designates acts not in accordance with God's character (1:77; 3:3; 5:20–21, 23–24; 6:37; 7:47–49; 12:10; 17:4; 23:34; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18). Sin is a specific example of what Jesus frees his followers from. Interestingly, the ideal pray-er is here called to designate him or herself as a sinner. To Luke, the pray-er is not a one-time sinner, but one who will need to continually ask for forgiveness. Being a follower of Jesus implies being a sinner, and at the same time seeking to avoid being just that. The prayer therefore involves the pray-er in a process of change. This is clearer in Luke, with its emphasis on continued discipleship, than in Matthew. The prayer internalises the worldview of the narrative and the implicit narrative it builds on. Again, the ideal pray-er is constructed in a tension between salvation and non-salvation. Prayer is a process of approaching the former, a way of discipleship. In the Synoptics there is a form of realism built into the striving for ideals. The ideals are presented, not as a statement of facts, but as a proleptic picture of an eschatological reality.

The relation to God set out in this prayer also involves the relation to others.[170] Prayer is offered as a community, as in the 1st person plural of

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169 So Fitzmyer 1985, 899–901.

170 So Cullmann 1995, 58. "God's fatherhood implies an awareness of human brotherhood." Fitzmyer 1985, 899. The view of forgiveness as only connected to final judgment is insufficient. Pace Schulz 1972, 91.

vv. 3 and 4.[171] At the same time, non-pray-ers are also included in the petition to forgive sins committed against others (cf. 6:28 which suggests that the "other" in mind is not only those within the community). Sin occurs in the interaction with others, yet it also involves God. The pray-er forgives, as this is what God does (aor impv ἄφες used of God, subordinate participle ἀφίομεν used of the pray-er).[172] The pray-er was just designated as a sinner and thus included in the same category as those who wronged him or her, pointing to Luke's loose definition of community borders.[173] Praying for forgiveness from God necessitates forgiving others in the same breath; an ideal later established conclusively in the scene where Jesus prays for forgiveness for the ones crucifying him (23:34). In the prayer, the follower of Jesus acts like God who forgives.

In the last petition the pray-er asks not to be led into testing/temptation (πειρασμός). The fact that the word is anarthrous suggests that this is not envisaged as the single final trial but continual testing.[174] It should be understood in the light of the general possibility of apostasy.[175] Just like the petition for forgiveness, this request also presents a picture of humans as weak. Prayer is what keeps the disciples from falling away from God. Such a reading is seconded by the call to endure in prayer (11:5–8; 18:1–8), and watch at all times in order to reach the last day (21:36). 22:28 shows that the disciples have shared Jesus' trials (πειρασμός). Moreover, in 12:12 the Spirit is the aid in situations of trial (cf. also 8:14–15; Acts 20:19). The 'trial' is thus not that last day itself but the period leading up to it. Moreover, Jesus instructs his disciples to overcome trials through prayer in 22:39 and 46.[176] Arguably, temptation fills an important function in Luke's presentation of salvation.[177]

Verses 5–8 include a parable unique to Luke.[178] This parable sets out the emotive stance appropriate for the previous prayer, guiding the audience

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171 See Manson 1949, 265.

172 Although "debtors" (ὀφείλοντι) is only used for money-debt in Greek, it should here be read to include sins (cf. Aramaic *choba* which includes both connotations). Luz 2002, 437.

173 Green 1995, 84–86, 117, 137.

174 Against Schweitzer 1910, 362.

175 So Fitzmyer 1985, 907. Such an emphasis would be natural in a community which had questions on the *parousia*.

176 Cf. Tannehill 1986, 240.

177 "Temptation is included in God's plan of salvation." Cullmann 1995, 64.

178 Cf. 18:1–8. Ott sees the sections as two traditions brought together. Ott 1965, 22–29, 71. Jeremias sees them as almost doublets. Jeremias 1972, 157. Contested by Nolland who suggests two different origins. Nolland 1993, 622.

to a right response. The use of a situation from everyday life as a spiritual lesson addresses the audience directly.[179] Two interpretations seem possible. The first would be a focus on how God differs from the beseeched friend. The other would be a focus on the petitioning friend which results in an encouragement to pray.[180] The two notions are connected since an encouragement to pray must refer to the probability of God hearing prayers.[181] The parable itself presents a situation that the listener would recognise as impossible (cf. τίς ἐξ ὑμῶν in v. 5).[182] The *crux interpretum* of the parable is the word *anaideia* (ἀναίδεια) in v. 8. It has often been translated as persistence or importunate prayer. It is now increasingly recognised that this needs to be replaced by 'shamelessness' or 'boldness'.[183] This is probable in the context where vv. 9–10 highlight the surety of the answer. On this understanding, the main point is the position of the petitioner in relation to God and not the correct execution of the prayer. Prayer is not offered on the basis of the merit of the pray-er, but on the basis of God's call to pray. In Luke the ideal pray-er utters the preceding prayer with an attitude of shamelessness, with God construed as a faithful friend.

In verses 9–10 a string of words are used as synonyms for prayer, with the present imperatives indicating continuous asking.[184] The thought of seeking God and finding him is implied (cf. Deut 4:29; Is 55:6; 65:1). In the Lucan narrative the two verses further emphasise the surety of answer. They can be read as a prophetic admonition (v. 9) with a prophetic promise (v. 10), leading the audience into action.[185] This is also the general thrust of the passage as a whole (vv. 1–13). It leads the audience into a particular religious practice through arguing that prayer is necessary for receiving God's gifts.[186] Read in conjunction with 12:22–31, the thought is similar to that found in Mt 6:8b–9a "Your Father knows what you need before you ask him. Pray then in this way. . . ." God is thought to know the

[179] Cf. Mt 6:27//Lk 12:25; Mt 7:9//Lk 11:11; Mt 12:11//Lk 14:5; Lk 11:5; 14:28; 15:4; 17:7.

[180] *VL* follows the later interpretation adding: *et si ille perseveraverit pulsans*.

[181] So Marshall 1978, 462.

[182] On the socio-historical background cf. Bailey 1976, 119–133.

[183] For bibliography see Crump 1992, 131. Cf. likewise Holmås 2011, 135–136. This does not do away with the picture of continuous prayers and calls for watchfulness at other places in Luke.

[184] ἀιτέω is common for prayer (11:10, 13). Sähling *TDNT* 1:191–193. Ζητέω is often used of seeking God (Deut 4:29; Is 65:1; 55:6. see also Ex 33:7; Ps 104:4) and praying (2 Sam 21:2; Pss 23:6; 26:8; Hos 5:15). Greeven *TDNT* 2:892.

[185] Nolland 1993, 629–630.

[186] The thought of God's sustaining gifts (cf. Mt 5:45) should also be understood as a basic presupposition in Luke.

needs of the disciples (12:22), still there is a call to prayer. The result is that the relationship to the Father is described in personal terms.

Verses 11–13 act as a final rationale to the teaching on prayer. The mention of the Father forms an inclusio with v. 2. As already argued, being a child of the Father is basic to prayer as taught by Jesus. The saying points forward to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the ultimate good gift, which for Luke is central in the work of salvation (Acts 2:38; 8:20; 10:45; 11:7).[187] It bears repeating that the Holy Spirit is seen as central in inspired speech, including prayer (1:67; 2:27; 6:12–13; 10:21–22). The Holy Spirit is a promise (Lk 24:49; Acts 1:4 cf. also Lk 3:16) and an answer to prayer (Acts 1:14; 2:1–4; 4:23–31; 8:14–17; 9:11–17).[188] The Holy Spirit works in the prayers of Jesus' followers to change them. According to other early witnesses it is only through the Holy Spirit that God can be called Father (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6). It can be noted that humans are thought to be evil by default (v. 13 "you who are evil" πονηρός), a further statement in line with the petitions for forgiveness and freedom from temptation. To Luke, humans are not capable of prayer without the help of God through the Holy Spirit (as in Rom 8:26; Eph 6:18). This seems to imply that the Spirit is at work in the pray-er even before he or she prays to receive this gift. In the progression of the narrative, the Holy Spirit is to be prayed for and received after the crucifixion and resurrection (Acts 1:14; 2:1). To Luke, the prayer teaching just given is only appropriate in light of those events.

The last sentence of v. 13 changes the perspective from God to the petitioner. The endnote of the teaching is practical, leading the follower of Jesus to action. To Luke, prayer is central in the discipleship Jesus calls his followers to. Prayer as such is inspired by the Holy Spirit, and expressed to God the Father. In Luke, prayer is instigated and sustained by God, who thereby transforms the pray-er. To Luke this is a situation which is pursued by the ideal follower of Jesus. In prayer the disciples do their part of the new covenant. The audience is in a very direct way thought to participate in God's work through prayer.

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[187] The reference to the Spirit is often seen as a Lucan addition. Cf. Marshall 1978, 470. Rodd argues Luke is not more likely to add than Matthew. Rodd 1960–61, 157.

[188] Cf. again Is 29:13–24 and Ez 36:26. On this background cf. Fitzmyer 1999, 181. Some argue that this passage shows that to Luke, prayer must be "spiritual." So Ott 1965, 107–108; Dupont 1981, 52; Bovon 2002, 208; Cullmann 1995, 24. With Luke's concern for the physical aspects of revelation and salvation this seems forced. Cf. the exegesis of 11:3.

18:1–14 Two Parables on Prayer and Salvation

In this passage Jesus' teaching on prayer is continued in two parables unique to Luke. Prayer is fit for the disciples in light of what lies ahead within the narrative (Lk 9:22, 13:33, 17:25).[189] Yet, here the call goes beyond the cross in the call to be praying "always" (πάντοτε v. 1). Prayer is a fitting activity for the disciples (and audience) at all times. The parables stylise and address different groups from within the larger narrative of Luke. The first parable vv. 1–8 is clearly directed at the disciples (cf. 17:22), whilst the second one vv. 9–14 addresses the Pharisees. Both construct an implied audience, one positively the other negatively.

In similar fashion to Lk 11:5–8 a parable is here used as an emotive conclusion to a teaching section (17:20–37).[190] The correct way to understand the eschatological discourse is by praying. In 17:20–21 Jesus explains to the Pharisees that the "kingdom of God" is already among them. Then he turns to the disciples to explain how a period of time will precede the ultimate vindication at the coming of the "Son of Man." "Son of Man" in v. 8 must be seen as a connection to the parable in the preceding material where the "Son of Man" is mentioned (17:22, 24, 26, 30). Because there are eschatological events that await completion, the disciples will find themselves in a situation of longing (17:22), where it will be possible to lose heart (18:1). At that time they must display a readiness that fits "those days" (17:22, 24, 26, 28, 30).[191] Prayer is the way to face that situation.[192]

The content of the parable is straightforward and typical in a first century Palestinian setting.[193] The first character of the parable is a judge who does not act justly. His description as "not respecting men" is a common phrase (ἐντρεπόμενος cf. Lk 20:13).[194] The second character is a widow who needs help against her opponent. She is vulnerable and has the right to special treatment (Lam 1:1; Ex 22:22–24; Ps 68:5; Acts 6:1). For some untold reason, the judge does not take on the widow's case. This basic scene then comes to a pivot in v. 5. The widow would "keep on coming"

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189 Cf. Jeremias 1972, 157.

190 Some see vv. 6–8 as edition or addition. Cf. Grässer 1957, 36f; Kümmel 1957, 59; Ott 1965, 32–72; Ellis 1974. I follow those who see the whole pericope as traditional. So Spicq 1961, 68–90; Delling 1962, 1–25; Jeremias 1972, 156; Catchpole 1977; Marshall 1978, 670–671.

191 Cf. Talbert 1982, 169.

192 Delling argues convincingly that 11:5–8 and 18:1–8 should not be read together to the effect that the eschatological elements of the latter passage are removed. Delling 1962.

193 Marshall 1978, 671–673; Oakman 1991, 168–69; Bock 1996, 1446–1450.

194 Cf. also Josephus *A.J.* 10:83.

(ἐρχομένη) "pestering" the judge (metaphorical use of ὑπωπιάζω "strike in the face"). The judge gives in and she is vindicated. The explication of the parable is given by Jesus in a simple lesser-to-greater construction.[195] Granted the above, how much more will God "grant justice" (ποιήσῃ τὴν ἐκδίκησιν) to his "elect" (τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν), meaning "he will rescue them" (as in Acts 7:24; Test. Sol. 22:4).[196] The term "elect" shows that compared to the unjust judge, God has a personal interest in the case of those crying.[197] The persistent pray-er will surely be vindicated at the coming of the Son of Man, God's agent (for other parables with dual application cf. Lk 11:8–13; 12:46–48; 15:11–32; 16:8–13).

It is the framing devices that provide the key to understanding how the parable contributes to an ideal. The parable is intended to show the "need" (πρὸς τὸ δεῖν) to pray always. "Always" (πάντοτε v. 1) is used in contrast to "coming to a point of failure" (ἐγκακεῖν v. 1b; which is also a contrast to the introductory ἀσφάλεια in 1:4). The effect is to highlight the need for sustained prayer and vigilance in light of the eschatology.[198] "To be necessary" (δεῖν) is central to the development of the argument of Luke-Acts (40 out of 101 NT occurrences). The term is common in Greek literature of the era, where it often takes on a meaning of absolute necessity or simply "fate."[199] The fact that Luke connects the term to a God that he conceives of as personal suggests that it is not used for fate here. In apocalyptic literature the word interprets "it is written" and serves as consolation (cf. Dan 2:28 LXX).[200] In Mark 8:31, the term is almost equal to "it is written." Luke most often uses the word to refer to the divine plan for Jesus and for man.[201] In Luke 18, the preceding eschatological speech suggests that the term refers not to moral necessity, not to a custom (Lk 22:7) or a way of speech (Acts 24:19), but to God's plan. In the immediate context in 17:25 the word (δεῖν) is used for Jesus' declaration that his suffering and rejection, namely that which leads to salvation, are necessary (Cf. also 9:22, 22:37, 24:7). Arguably the use of the term in 18:1 belongs to a salvation-historical argument (cf. the similar use of δεῖν and prayer

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195 Cf. Doeve 1954, 66–75; Ott 1965, 42–43; Fitzmyer 1985, 1180.

196 Not "retaliate" as in T. Levi 3:3 Cf. Jeremias 1972, 154. n. 8. Marshall shows how 'elect' is used of Jesus in 23:35. Marshall 1978, 674.

197 Warfield 1913/14, 137. τῶν βοώντων is used in the sense of crying out to God for mercy (Cf. Ex 8:12; 15:25; Num 12:13; Lk 9:38; 18:38 for the same use cf. Stauffer *TDNT* 1:625–26.

198 Hamman 1971, 163. Cf. Mt 24:42; 25:13; Mk. 13:35–37; Lk 12:37–39.

199 Grundmann *TDNT* 2:23.

200 Bennet 1975, 113–129.

201 Conzelmann 1961, 151–153; Ernst 1977, 52–55.

in Jn 4:24).[202] It does not refer to an act on par with Jesus' salvific work. However, the argument seems to be that prayer is a part of that work. Moreover, it ensures that the connection to God is maintained in faithfulness and obedience through trials, as an embodiment of faithful discipleship (repeating 2:36–38, cf. Jn 15:1–10).[203]

The perseverance described is seen as an expression of faith/faithfulness (πίστις v. 8 a similar use is found in 22:32).[204] This stems in with the Psalmic cry to God, which Luke uses as a legitimate address of God.[205] The widow's persistent "coming" and the qualification "day and night" (v. 7) imply a continued action (cf. LXX Ps 1:2; 31:3; 41:3; 54:10). Verse 1 uses "always" and "come to a point of failure" (ἐγκακεῖν). The effect is that prayers are not thought to be answered immediately. Yet, God will not "delay" (μακροθυμεῖ v. 7) but answer "quickly" (ἐν τάχει v. 8).[206] In the light of 17:26–35, this must imply "unexpectedly."[207] If the various notions (vv. 1, 7, 8) are allowed to balance each other, the argument is for an answer that is sure and permanent.[208] It is in this context the connection between God and the judge must be understood. God is not an unwilling judge, yet prayer does involve waiting.[209] In the OT, the "delay" of God is often expressed very pointedly (Gen 32:24; Job; Ps 6:3; 13:1; 35:17; 79:5; 80:4; Dan 10:13).[210] In Luke this presence/absence tension is a basic presupposition of prayer.[211] To Claus Westermann, both 18:1–8 and 11:5–8 show God's "merciful acceptance" and are dependent on the "certainty of hearing in the Psalms of Lament."[212] Jesus' interpretation of the parable ends with a rhetorical question calling for faith at the return of the Son of Man (v. 8). The disciples will be "vindicated" if they prayerfully wait for the final act

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202 Possibly, it is to be seen as a response to misguided *parousia* expectations.

203 Cullmann 1995, 144.

204 So Hamman 1971, 162; Johnson 1991, 24.

205 Bovon 2001, 195.

206 For discussion of various interpretations of μακροθυεῖ cf. Marshall 1978, 675; Bock 1996, 1452–1454. Cf. Sir 35:14–18.

207 So Ott 1965, 65–66. Cf. Rev 1:1.

208 Jeremias comes to the same conclusion via Semitics. Jeremias 1972, 154–155.

209 In this sense there is some leverage in the argument that Luke is concerned with a delayed *parousia*.

210 Cf. Balentine on OT prayer and the absence of God. Balentine 1999, 146–198.

211 Terrien sees accounts of the elusive presence of God as the centre of Biblical theology. Terrien 1978, 470–477.

212 Westermann 1990, 185. Cf. also Prov 24:15.

of God (the coming of the Son of Man).[213] In 17:5 the disciples ask for increased faith and in the parable they are shown how to live it out.

The parable in vv. 9–14 is connected to the former by verbal analogy and the combination of the themes of prayer and salvation. Whereas the previous parable was addressed to the disciples, this one is directed to the Pharisees who have been in the background since 17:20. Here they are the "someone" (τινας) of v. 9. Both characters of the parable are typical in a Palestinian setting, though with a certain literary embellishment.[214] Note that the natural location for prayer is the Temple. The Pharisee and toll-collector of the parable are representative of two forms of piety.

The Pharisee is portrayed negatively as one who is self centred, he stood "by himself" (v. 11).[215] Throughout Luke the Pharisees have an ambivalent role; here they are a foil for the teaching of Jesus (as in 5:17–26; 6:7; 7:39; 11:38, 53).[216] The Pharisee starts out by praying words similar to those in Ps 17:3–5 and Ps 26. He uses five first person verbal forms, not a single second person form. His prayer includes negative descriptions of other groups, including the tax-collector, displaying a self-understanding based on contrasts to others that he condemns.[217] Furthermore, the Pharisee attempts to force a view of himself upon God. This form of piety is presented as anti-dialogical and self-righteous; a clear contrast to Luke's emphasis on humility.

The second character, and second form of piety, is the tax-collector. That a tax-collector can embody an ideal points to Luke's program of social reversal. The tax-collector addresses God in a manner reminiscent of Ps 51 (cf. LXX Ps 25:11; 64:3; 77:38; 78:9). Jesus emphasises this strand of the tradition over that used by the Pharisee, adding to his role as normative teacher. The tax-collector humbly accepts the view of himself as a sinner which in turn leads to acceptance by God.[218] Verse 14 has the only

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213 Cf. Lk 7:9//Mt 8:10. Colpe *TDNT* 7:435.

214 Cf. Marshall 1978, 678. 1 QH 7:34. b. Ber 28b shows that the picture is more than a simple caricature. Cf. Str-B 2:240f.

215 Cf. Marshall 1978, 678. Marshall notes that some pharisaic schools understood themselves as having a superior righteousness (Josephus *B.J.* 1:10; Sanh 101a; Sukka 45b). Marshall 1978, 679.

216 Carrol 1988, 604–621. The Pharisees are both antagonists and a link to Israel. In Lk 20:39 and Acts 23:6f the Pharisees defend the resurrection. Cf. further Gowler 1991.

217 Luke's negative presentation of the Pharisees is somewhat paradoxical in this context.

218 In his prayer "gelangt der Zöllner dennoch zu seinem wahren Selbst und erlaubt so Gott, Gott zu sein." Bovon 2001, 217.

occurrence in the Gospel of the 'Pauline' term "justification" (δεδικαιωμένος from δικαιόω cf. also Acts 13:38).[219] Both vindication (ἐκδίκησις in v. 8) and justification contribute to Luke's presentation of salvation.[220] With the overwhelming focus on Jesus as the Saviour and Lord these references must somehow be thought to be proleptic. 18:14 repeats the saying in 14:11 that humbleness leads to exaltation. Although the ultimate vindication of vv. 1–8 lies in the future, one aspect of salvation can be begun today (v. 14 "he went home justified"). This parable is often read as a description of righteousness through faith, or the primacy of the attitude of the heart.[221] It is true that the attitudes of the two pray-ers are contrasted, yet Luke does not make any introspective deductions. For Luke, right prayer *is* the relationship.[222]

19:46 A House of Prayer

At this stage of the narrative, Luke uses a scene given far greater importance in Matthew and Mark. In contrast to them, Luke does not include the scene of the fig tree and the saying on faith that moves mountains.[223] Neither does he reproduce the concluding teaching on prayer which the other two Synoptics use (Mt 21:21–22; Mk 11:24–25); highly significant in a Gospel with an emphasis on prayer. Jesus is not directly involved in what could be understood as acts of judgment against the Temple *per se*. His ministry in Jerusalem is in essence a ministry in the Temple (19:45; 20:1; 21:37). This was clear already in the episode of the young Jesus staying in his "Father's House" (2:46). The picture of Temple piety found in the infancy narrative is picked up at the end of the Gospel (24:53). At the same time, Jesus predicts the destruction of the Temple (indirectly 19:44; fully in 21:5).[224] The authorities are upset at his acts in the Temple (19:47). Although Luke starts his narrative with the Temple, he at the same time relativises its importance. This scene functions as a stark contrast to the early pictures of an ideal piety in the Temple. To Luke, this is a natural progression in the outworking of the plan of God (21:22); "The most high

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[219] Marshall 1978, 680; Bruce 1952, 66–77. It is not only Pauline though, as is shown by Ps 51:19; 1QSb 4:22; 4 Ez 12:7.

[220] On prayer and justification in this passage cf. Arndt 1956, 380; Fitzmyer 1985, 1185.

[221] As does Marshall 1978, 681.

[222] So Johnson 1991, 274.

[223] Cf. However the parable of the fig tree in Lk 13:6–9.

[224] Holmås reads the passage as a "prophetic sign that warns of God's judgement on the temple." Holmås 2011, 144. Cf. Likewise Holmås 2005, 393–416. So also Walker 1996, 61–64.

does not dwell in buildings made by human hands" (Acts 7:48). To Luke, the Temple's ideal function, as a place of prayer, is not fulfilled at present. The next step in this argument is to claim that this function is in fact performed in the community of Jesus' followers who pray in the way enabled by Jesus.

20:47 Prayer for Show

In this scene a negative picture of piety adds to the ideal pray-er by providing a contrast to the praxis of a competing group (cf. 5:33; 18:9–14).[225] The false piety of the scribes will lead to their "greater condemnation." The praxis under critique is the custom of making "lengthy prayers for show." To Luke, prayer is defunct if performed as an address to someone other than God (cf. Mt 5:20; 6:6). Luke does not have anything against sustained prayer as such, as shown by the widow in 18:1–8. Rather, it is the use of prayer as a tool of self-aggrandisement which is critiqued. The weak characters carry the ideal, to the extent that their acts become typical for all followers of Jesus (a widow is used as a contrast also in this scene, 20:47a). The presentation carries an ironic quality in revealing the religious "experts" as ignorant, and Jesus' followers as insiders. Furthermore, the effect is to argue that the relation to others is not separated from the relationship to God. Luke emphasises the haughty and oppressive traits of the opponents, to further establish the ideal of humility and weakness.

21:36 Prayer in the Eschatological Discourse

Luke includes a fair amount of material on eschatological issues, following the main line of arguments also found in Mark and Matthew (12:35–59; 17:20–37; 21:5–36). Yet, as already indicated, Luke focuses more on the present implications of the *eschaton*.[226] Luke does not use the saying on prayer for the timing of the event (in contrast to Mk 13:18; Mt 24:20). In that sense, the focus is not on its specific outworking. Neither does Luke use the Synoptic saying on watching and praying in the Gethsemane scene. Instead a saying which fits better into the narrative progression is used, "stand up and pray" (22:46). Luke shares with Mark and Matthew the basic thought of prayer as a response to the eschatological situation

[225] The acts are quite specific and do not conform to normal vice-lists.
[226] So Fitzmyer 1985, 1355.

the disciples, and audience, find themselves in. However, the strategy for communicating this is slightly different.

It is clear that a time period is envisaged before the return of the Son of Man (vv. 25–28). This time period goes beyond the cross and resurrection, and also the destruction of the Temple.[227] It is in this light which the call to sustained prayer must be understood. Prayer is what sustains Jesus' followers until the end and the unexpected arrival of "that day" (Lk 21:34 cf. 1 Thess 5:1–3, 7–8). It can safely be assumed that prayer is a proper activity to be engaged in at the return of the Son of Man. It would avoid the punishment of the Lord of the House when he returns to his servants, some of whom are drunk (πίνειν καὶ μεθύσκεσθαι 12:45). In contrast to these servants, the ideal pray-er is not drunk (κραιπάλῃ καὶ μέθῃ 21:34), but alert (ἀγρυπνεῖτε 21:36), and praying (δεόμενοι 21:36). The thought is similar to that in ch. 18. Redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις v. 28) is drawing near, but it is possible to lose heart (v. 34). The right response to the eschatological discourse is prayer, which will be answered with "strength to stand" (v. 36). This ability to stand is a gift of God in answer to prayer.[228]

Prayer to Jesus?

There are in this first section of Luke some passages which could be understood as indirect hints at prayers directed to Jesus. This is especially true of the petitions directed to Jesus in a number of miracle-scenes (4:39; 5:12; 7:1–10; 8:41). It can be observed that the pertinent material is mainly concentrated to the early ministry section, whereas the travel narrative focuses more on teaching. The mentioned scenes are not very specific, and the material does not carry the same weight as it does in Mark where miracles take up a larger proportion. Neither are there any strong psalmic allusions in the material in Luke (the one exception is the miracle scene in 18:38). One example of special note is the storm scene with the address of Jesus found in 8:24. Matthew uses some explicit psalmic language in this scene (Mt 8:25 κύριε σῶσον), whereas Luke does not seem to be

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[227] Marshall argues against the "false assumption" that Jesus did not expect an interval before the *parousia*. Marshall 1978, 783. Holmås suggests that Luke includes delay in his scheme only to emphasise that "the *Eschaton* can take place at any time." Holmås 2011, 148.

[228] Pace Ott 1965. The thought that Luke "invented" persistent prayer as a response to the delay of the *parousia* is unnecessary. Continuous prayer is consistent with how Jesus is presented in all the Gospels. That Luke emphasised this particular aspect of tradition to meet present needs is a different question.

communicating implicitly to the audience at this instance (ἐπιστάτα ἐπιστάτα ἀπολλύμεθα). The reason for this reticence seems to be Luke's strict adherence to the narrative progression. It is first after the cross and outpouring of the Spirit that the disciples pray to him as "Lord" (cf. Acts 7:59; 19:17).[229]

Narrative Progression: Travel Narrative and Ministry in Jerusalem

The travel narrative (9:51–19:27) displays Jesus' progression towards Jerusalem together with his disciples. It is very similar in form to Acts (cf. Acts 9:2; 18:25–26; 19:9, 23). In the earlier section the disciples were with Jesus when he prayed (9:18; 28). Now they are explicitly commanded to pray (10:2) and ask for instruction on how to do it (11:1). At this stage of the narrative they follow Jesus more fully on the way of discipleship (cf. 9:35), part of which includes extended teaching on prayer (11:2–13; 18:1–14). The teaching sections also communicate directly to the audience. In that sense, the development of the theme of prayer is more explicit than implicit in this section. Jesus has a unique relation to God, and it is therefore that he can teach his disciples how to pray. In part, Jesus is used as a type for prayer. Both Jesus and the disciples share a part in the same plan of salvation. The ideal pray-er receives 'hallowing,' 'vindication' and 'justification' in answer to prayer. This is a construction of a particular or even idealised picture of OT piety which is continued by the followers of Jesus. They are to be seen as part of faithful Israel. This aspect is made more explicit in the later parts of the material where Jesus enters Jerusalem. There the tension increases through confrontations with the Jewish leaders. Part of this confrontation also involves discussions on piety, and its correct performance.

Passion Narrative 22:1–24:53

The teaching and sharing of the travel narrative are forced into the background as the definitive deed of Jesus is prepared for and enacted. The tension with the Jewish leaders here reaches a realease point in their conviction of Jesus. At this stage there is actually a regression on the part of the disciples as the plot reaches its summit in Jerusalem. At that moment

[229] Cf. 10:2 and 10:17 where Jesus is addressed as κύριος. However, these are not prayer-settings.

Jesus stands alone before God. As will be seen it is only after the cross that the disciples can be fully included in Jesus' ministry, a reality above all depicted in Acts.

22:15–20 Last Supper

Although the 'Eucharist' came to be seen as a prayer in the community of Jesus' followers, the passage is not a prayer according to the definitions here used (petitionary verbal communication). The scene uses a first person address of God in which Jesus gives thanks before breaking the bread. This is in accordance with Jewish meal-customs, as already discussed (9:16).[230] Indirectly the passage relates to prayer in that it develops a devotion centred on Jesus. It is the mark of a new covenant which envisages a new relation to God (cf. Jer 31:31, LXX 38:31 καινὴ διαθήκη).[231] This new relation is centred on Jesus, and includes direct devotion to him (24:50–53). If Jesus is the object of prayer, he cannot also pray with the disciples. The bread and wine interpret the death of Jesus and at the same time actualise it in a religious act. In that sense the meal can indirectly be seen as a form of prayer. It is thought to connect the participant to Jesus, and express a perceived need for that which he has accomplished.[232] This is similar to the work of the Holy Spirit which is also thought to work something in the follower of Jesus. The emphasis is on a gift, the body and blood are "for you" (cf. Acts 20:28).[233] The word "remembrance" (v. 19 ἀνάμνησις) could be seen as an echo of OT sacrificial language (Lev 24:7; Num 10:10; Ps 38:1; 69:1 cf. Acts 10:2–4 where Cornelius' prayers are a memorial μνημόσυνον). In this sense, Luke can be thought to circumvent the Temple through the use of this scene as a constituent part of the Lucan theology.

22:31–32 Prayer for the Recovery of Peter

This scene mainly provides a comment on God's plan of salvation, which Jesus directs through his role as Intercessor (a role more evident in John, cf. Jn 14:16; 17:1–26).[234] This cannot be seen as a paradigm for the ideal

[230] Cf. the exegesis of Lk 9:16 and appropriate parallels in Matthew and Mark.

[231] The use of "you" (ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν) instead of "many" (ὑπὲρ πολλῶν) as in Mk 14:24 means that Jer 31 is emphasised over Is 53. So Marshall 1978, 801.

[232] Cf. Luke's eschatological banquet language 5:29–32; 7:36–50; 9:12–17; 10:38–42; 11:37–44; 14:1–24.

[233] Giving it sacrificial and soteriological overtones. So Fitzmyer 1985, 1391.

[234] Ellis 1974; Feldkämper 1978; Talbert 1982, 211, 256; Crump 1992.

pray-er, it is part of the unique Christological functions of the prayer-material. Certainly, the thought of Jesus as intercessor might in itself lead to him being invoked to pray (cf. Heb 5:7; 7:25). In the passage in question, Jesus' prayers ensure that in the end Peter's faith will not fail (μὴ ἐκλίπῃ), again pointing to the need to endure.[235] The term 'faith' is here used with the connotation 'faithfulness/loyalty.' The scene prepares for the passion in which Jesus will be abandoned by all others. True, Luke is gentler on Peter and the other disciples in including this explanation of sifting (cf. also 23:49; Acts 1–2), but they still fail Jesus at this point. It is an act of Jesus which ensures their recovery. He is portrayed as directly impacting the faith of his followers.

In this scene Satan represents an anti-ideal. Satan is God's opponent (4:1–13) and works to subvert his plan with Jesus and the disciples. The use of "demand" (ἐξαιτέομαι) for his request in v. 31 indicates the wrong kind of posture when addressing God. This demanding attitude serves as a contrast to the already presented need for dialogue and humility in prayer. The verb is stronger than the "ask" (αἰτέω) found in 1:63; Acts 16:29 and of prayer in Lk 11:9, 11–12. This can be compared to Jesus who is portrayed as approaching God with the term "beseech" (ἐδεήθην—δέομαι v. 32).

22:39–46 Jesus' Prayer on the Mount of Olives

The upper room discourse ends in 22:38 and the arrest of Jesus is preceded by his prayer (vv. 39–46).[236] Verse 39 introduces the passage with a reference to Jesus' habit (κατὰ τὸ ἔθος) of going to Jerusalem and staying at the Mount of Olives. This is in accordance with the custom of his pious family going to the festivals (κατά τὸ ἔθος 2:42).[237] The scene displays a chiastic structure with an introductory call to prayer concluded by a similar call at the end (an inclusio). At the midpoint of the chiasm stands the divine intervention in v. 43.[238] At this stage of the narrative,

[235] He will "turn back" (ἐπιστρέφω) cf. LXX Neh 1:9; Hos 3:5; 5:4; 6:1; Amos 4:6; Joel 2:12; Is 6:10; 9:13; Jer 3:10 and in the NT Luke 1:16–17; 17:4; Acts 3:19; 9:35; 11:21; 14:15; 15:19; 26:18, 20.

[236] For historical questions cf. Barbour 1969–70, 231–251.

[237] Which 'explains' why Judas knew where to find Jesus (cf. 21:37 and Jn 18:2).

[238] Verses 43–44 are not found in a number of important manuscripts, a reading followed by Weiss and Bousset 1917, 514; Easton 1926, 330; Metzger 1971, 177; Ehrman and Plunkett 1983, 401–416. They are however found in א* D L 565 700 pm lat sycp bopt Justin Iren. Followed by Zahn 1913, 688; Dibelius 1953, 202; Kuhn 1952, 268; Schlatter 1960, 433; Lescow 1967, 217; Linnemann 1970, 38; Feuillet 1975–76, 397; Marshall 1978, 832; Johnson 1991, 351. The presence of the verses in Justin, Irenaeus, and Hippolitus and the absence in Marcion, Clement, and Origen might indicate theological preferences behind an inclusion

Jesus removes himself from the disciples when he is going to pray. Gone is their gradual inclusion in his communion with God. In this scene, an ideal is constructed through the continued presentation of Jesus as a pray-er and also through the teaching he gives his disciples.

Throughout Luke, Jesus is consistently portrayed as a pray-er and especially before the decisive points in the narrative. Here he mounts a mountain to pray before the most important events of the narrative. Although Luke maintains Jesus' dignity through more polished language than Mark, the scene does portray a real struggle and sacrifice.[239] The struggle of Jesus brings to mind the OT prayers for a change of mind on the part of God, and is in that sense traditional (Ex 32:10–14; 2 Sam 15:25–26; 2 Kg 20:1–6; cf. 1 Macc 3:58–60).[240] The emotional tone of the scene is shown in Jesus' withdrawal (v. 41 ἀπεσπάσθη), and the reference to his anguish (v. 44 ἀγωνία).[241] That Jesus knelt down shows the urgency of his prayer and the humility he shows before God.[242] The divine intervention (v. 43) implies that the battle was real. It was after the strengthening by the angel that Jesus prayed more fervently (v. 44 ἐκτενέστερον cf. Acts 12:5) and could finish the prayer. In prayer Jesus is shown to accept that which lies before him in the passion, the will of God—his plan of salvation (cf. Acts 22:14).[243]

Besides characterisation unique to Jesus, Luke also illustrates a number of more general ideals in prayer. Jesus' fervent prayer brings to mind his teaching in 18:1–8 (and to a lesser extent 11:5–8).[244] The help of the angel actually results in Jesus being able to pray even *more* fervently (v. 44). Another important aspect is the emphasis on humility in prayer. The wording of the prayer suggests that Jesus' petition from the start indicates a submission to God (εἰ βούλει gives the utterance a conditional

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or removal. The verses are included here since they are solidly Lucan, in language, and in thought (1:11–26; 2:9–13; 4:3; 9:30–31; Acts 9:19). Oepke *TDNT* 3:434–437. cf. Gn 28:10; 37:5, 9. For connections to the transfiguration cf. Kenney 1957.

[239] For Jesus as Martyr in Luke cf. Ernst 1977, 643; Conzelmann 1961, 83; Talbert 1982, 212.

[240] Cf. Brown 1994, 166–167; Balentine 1999, 118.

[241] For 'withdrawal' cf. Bock 1996, 1758. cf. Acts 21:1. Some see "anguish" (ἀγωνία) as an athletic or martial allusion where Jesus is eager for victory. Cf. Neyrey 1985, 59–62; Brown 1994, 189–90. Cf. Phil 1:30, 2 Tim 4:7. Cf. also Col 4:12 "wrestling in his prayers" (ἀγωνιζόμενος). Bock sees ἀγωνία as anxiety or fear, a notion followed here. Bock 1996, 1761.

[242] Standing was the common posture (1 Sam 1:26). See further the section on Jewish prayer customs in the introduction.

[243] Schrenk *TDNT* 2:56.

[244] Ott unconvincingly argues that this is the most important element in the scene. Ott 1965, 97.

connotation).[245] Jesus accepts God's will, sharing in his plan through prayer (cf. 22:37). This is shown to be an ideal in Acts where Paul accepts the plan of God, including suffering, with words similar to this prayer (Acts 21:14 τὸ θέλημα γινέσθω exactly the same as in v. 42).[246] To Luke, prayer is a dialogical process, for Jesus as well as his followers.

Within the narrative the call to prayer should be read as preparing the disciples for the passion.[247] Compared to the other Synoptics, the focus is off the disciples and their failure in a singular emphasis on Jesus and his prayer. He does not return three times to find them sleeping. Neither does he single out three special disciples; he addresses them all with the same words. Note also the absence of the negative saying about the weakness of the flesh (cf. 18:9–14 with its "weak" ideal). Jesus gives a command, withdraws to pray, and returns back. At his return the disciples are found to be sleeping, but Luke includes an excuse in the mention of their grief which leads to sleep/exhaustion.[248] This is not to say that Luke commends the disciples, they do fail to do what they are commanded to (vv. 40, 45). At this point in the narrative they do not understand and are not able to follow Jesus. The call to pray is fitting in view of the coming death of their leader. However, they meet their trial with violence rather than prayer (vv. 49–50, cf. also v. 38).

The explicit teaching on prayer in the face of trial/temptation (40, 46) continues other such teaching in Luke (11:4; 18:1–8). These consistent calls to wakefulness and persistence suggest that this scene is also to be seen as a type for the audience. There is a danger that the faith of the disciples might fail (22:31–32) at their trial, but in prayer it can be overcome. If only read within the narrative, the call to prayer could be taken as counterproductive, as Jesus has predicted the necessary denial of the disciples. Jesus must hang on the cross alone. In 22:28 'temptation' is used to refer to continued trials and tribulations throughout Jesus' ministry. The result is a more general call to prayer to maintain faith in the face of trials and

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245 Cf. Bovon 2009, 306.

246 Parallel to Mt 6:10 and 26:42. Note that Luke does not use this petition so important to Matthew in Lk 11:1f.

247 In this test the whole of Satan's opposition to Jesus comes together in one event. So Brown 1994, 159–161. Cf. also 8:13 and 11:4.

248 Neyrey and Lescow argue that λυπης can be interpreted in the light of Stoicism and Hellenistic Judaism to present the disciples as guiltridden. Cf. Lescow 1967, 215–239; Neyrey 1980, 153–171. Yet this seems to read too much psychology into the text.

suffering. Altogether it is clear that praying the way taught in Luke leads to a life patterned on that of Jesus.[249]

23:34 Prayer from the Cross

Within the narrative, the saying in 23:34 goes together with the other sayings of Jesus in the crucifixion narrative (23:28–31, 43, 46). The address of God as "Father" is common enough in Luke (10:21; 11:2; 22:42; 23:46).[250] It is not absolutely clear who is implicated in the prayer for forgiveness. It was an assembly of elders, highpriests and scribes (22:66 τὸ πρεσβυτέριον τοῦ λαοῦ ἀρχιερεῖς τε καὶ γραμματεῖς) which brought Jesus to Pilate. In 23:13 the leaders and the people are added to these designations (τοὺς ἀρχοντας καὶ τὸν λαόν). The Roman soldiers are not explicitly mentioned until v. 36. Still, Jesus is in Pilate's custody and hence in the charge of Roman soldiers (23:1, 16), and they are the ones who are there to divide his clothes in the second part of v. 34. The result seems to be that Luke presents the crucifixion as a joint endeavour with the prayer being for all those who crucified him without further distinction.[251]

In praying for those who crucify him, Jesus is shown to follow the teaching on praying for enemies (6:28), establishing it through his own behaviour. There might also be an echo of the prophets' intercession on behalf of the people.[252] Opposed by all, Jesus still acts according to this ideal. True, the opponents of Jesus are not really enemies as shown by the qualification of the prayer, they are merely ignorant (they "know not what they do").[253] The prayer is paralleled at the martyrdom of Stephen who prays according to a similar logic, though with different words (Acts

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[249] On the life and death of Jesus as a pattern cf. Moltmann 1972, 290–299.

[250] The textual status of the pertinent part of the verse (34a) is highly uncertain. It is absent in a number of important manuscripts with wide dispersal: p75, ℵ[1], B, D*, W, Θ, 0124, 1241, 579, *pc*, a, sy[s], sa, bo[pt], Cyril. Mainly based on internal evidence it will here be included, though with considerable hesitancy. Cf. Marshall 1978, 868. It is regarded as Lucan by Harnack 1901, 255–261; Streeter 1936, 138–139; Ellis 1974, 267; Marshall 1978, 868; Brown 1994, 980; Holmås 2011, 109. A possible reason for excision could be the downfall of Jerusalem which could be taken to infer that the prayer was unanswered. There is also the possibility that the saying was removed by antisemitic editors who did not accept a general forgiveness for the Jews (if they are indeed implied in the prayer). Cf. Epp 1962, 51–62. It could be of dominical origin but added later, as argues Metzger 1971, 180.

[251] Both Jews and Romans. So Brown 1994, 973.

[252] Cf. Ex 32–33. So Carras 1997, 605–616.

[253] Ignorance coupled with forgiveness is found throughout Luke, cf. 1:77; 7:47–50; Acts 2:38; 3:17; 5:31; 10:43; 13:27, 38; 14:16. In Luke it is acceptable as a pre-stage to conversion; as a fixed state of mind it is akin to unbelief and damnable: Cf. Daube 1961, 58. cf. also Num 15:24; Acts 13:27; 17:23, 30; Rom 2:4; 10:3; Eph 4:18; 1 Pet 1:14).

7:60). The result is again to present Jesus as a type for the piety of his followers. The prayer also points to one of the emphases of the early mission; repentance and forgiveness of sins, themes already seen in the prayer-material (11:4).[254]

23:46 Last Words of Jesus

Luke ends the life of Jesus with him uttering the words "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." The scene is different than that in Mark and Matthew with Jesus being characterised as being more in control of the situation. Luke uses a more polished prose, the derelict shout Mark is not used (see also 22:39ff; cf. Mk 15:34; Mt 27:46). He "shouted with a loud voice" (φωνήσας φωνῇ μεγάλῃ) and did not "cry with a loud voice" (Mk 15:34 ἐβόησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς φωνῇ μεγάλῃ Mt 27:50 κράξας φωνῇ μεγάλῃ).[255] Jesus is in control of events as he has been throughout the narrative, not losing his composure.[256] The words are borrowed from Psalm 31:6 (LXX 30:6), a prayer that was prescribed as an evening prayer by the later rabbis.[257] It expresses confidence in God's salvation despite present woes. Jesus again uses 'Father' in a prayer address (10:21; 11:2; 22:42; 23:34); a use which highlights that this is a scene of trustful submission (compare to "God" in Mk 15:34). It is an expression of faith in God who even raises the dead.[258]

The use of similar words at the martyrdom of Stephen immediately points to the use of this scene as a type (Acts 7:59 where Stephen prays to Jesus). The use in Acts shows that the two prayers from the cross are among those which apply also to the audience. The cross is thereby used as a model of discipleship (as in Lk 9:23–26 with parallels). A natural corollary is that Jesus' prayer, which accompanied him on his way to the cross, is an example to those who follow in his footsteps. In this way Luke includes the experience of suffering in the ideal pray-er (Lk 6:28; cf. 1 Pet 4:1).

254 A legitimation of the later emphasis. So Johnson 1991, 376.
255 So Klein 2006, 714. "weil es zivilisierter, . . ., klingt."
256 Neyrey shows how this trait makes the scenes more agreeable to a Greek audience. Neyrey 1985, 49–68.
257 *b. Ber.* 5a. It is possible that this custom was contemporary with Jesus.
258 Neyrey 1985, 147.

24:30–35 Jesus Blesses Bread

As in 9:16 and 22:19 Jesus "blesses" at the breaking of bread in this scene towards the end of the Gospel. The eyes of the wanderers to Emmaus are opened not in the exposition of Scriptures but in an act of prayer which hints at the Last Super (cf. the use of the participle "taking" λαβών and "breaking" κλάσας and the main verb "blessed" εὐλόγησεν as found in the Marcan version). The construction seems to emphasise that the true identity of Jesus is only seen in the religious act itself. The scene is appropriately placed at the end of the Gospel guiding the audience into right action.[259] This points to the contention of Luke that the right way to understand the narrative is to respond in religious acts, of which prayer is absolutely central (18:1–14; 21:36). Not just any form of prayer, but that form taught and enabled by Jesus and continued by his followers.

24:50–53 Jesus Blesses his Followers; They Worship Him, and Bless the Lord

In Luke the audience is brought beyond the crucifixion and resurrection (even more so in Acts). This is also the case with the teaching on prayer. Prayer leads Jesus to the cross, and sustains him there. Before he ascends into heaven he lifts his hands and blesses the disciples.[260] In Luke, Jesus prays before the calling of the disciples (6:12–13), for Peter's faith (22:31–32), and here he blesses them. He never prays "with" them. The reason why is evident in the next verse where they worship him (24:52 προσκυνήσαντες αὐτόν cf. 4:8 and the similar use in Mt 4:1–11 together with 28:16–20).[261] Jesus is the object of their prayer, and cannot unite with them in this manner (cf. Acts 7:59). At this point his followers proceed by blessing God in the Temple (v. 53 ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ εὐλογοῦντες τὸν θεόν), continuing the piety of the infancy narrative. To Luke, the disciples can only unite with Jesus by entering into the new relation with the Father which he has made possible.

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[259] "The lesson in the story is that henceforth the risen Christ will be present to his assembled disciples, not visibly (after the ascension), but in the breaking of the bread." Fitzmyer 1985, 1559.

[260] To think of him continuing in prayer in heaven is not too great a step. Cf. Lk 22:31–32; 1 Jn 2:1; Heb 7:25; 9:14; Rom 8:34.

[261] προσκυνήσαντες αὐτὸν is read with D it sy^{s}. It can be observed that the editors changed in favour of this reading after NA25.

Narrative Progression: Passion Narrative

The passion narrative is the highpoint of Luke's double work. As Jesus and the disciples approach Jerusalem, the intimacy between them recedes. When Jesus prays at this stage of the narrative, he distances himself from them (22:41). Jesus is left alone before God as the disciples move into the background observing what happens to him. After the resurrection, they finally understand and worship him. They had not been able to see Jesus earlier. Now they do, based on the salvific act of God. The pious characters of faithful Israel are now continued in the group of Jesus' followers. These followers, the least and the children, are portrayed as truly embodying the ideals of the Temple.

The primary role of the prayer material of the Passion Narrative is to develop the Christology, but for Luke that includes didactic elements. In the passion Jesus is portrayed as following his own teaching on prayer. On a general level this is clear in the way prayer leads him to follow the saving plan of God, even through suffering. For Luke, the cross is a symbol of discipleship.[262] In agreement with the earlier prayer-teaching, Jesus now prays for the will of God and for his enemies (22:42; 23:34). The repetition of these teachings, also found in Acts, shows that they are seen as types for followers of Jesus (Acts 7:60; 21:14).

Conclusion

Construction of the Ideal Pray-er

As noted in the introduction, Luke has the most material on prayer among the four canonical Gospels. The theme of prayer can also be thought to be among Luke's central concerns. It is integrated with other major theological themes like Christology, salvation, and discipleship. The wealth of material also means that it is used in more ways than in the other Gospels. In what follows, the strategies employed to elicit the response of prayer will be discussed (as described in the introduction). Note that point b (relating the audience to the character of Jesus) and point e (narrative progression) are discussed together as they are basically inseparable in the Lucan construction of the ideal pray-er.

[262] Green 1990.

Luke includes significant passages of direct teaching (point a). However, the passages are set in a different context than Matthew. In Luke the teaching material is integrated into the narrative, and its progression, to a higher degree than the other Synoptics. The most important prayer teaching of Luke is the direct speech of the Lucan ideal prayer given in 11:2–4. This prayer contains most of the main tenets of Jesus' teaching in Luke (eschatology 9:27; 12:32; material needs 12:12–34; repentance 13:1–5; 18:9–14; forgiveness 6:27–36; 17:3–4; wakefulness 8:13; 21:36).[263] This teaching can be given after Jesus has revealed himself and through that his relationship to the Father (more on this in the next paragraph). A distinctive part of the Lucan prayer teaching is the use of parables (11:5–8 and 18:1–14). These three parables are used to provide the correct emotive stance for the teaching presented. In this, they function as instructions on how to actualise the teaching presented elsewhere. Prayer is the correct response to the teachings of Jesus, especially that which concerns eschatology (18:1–14). To this must be added the saying on prayer for the harvest (10:2), and the instruction given at the Mount of Olives (22:40, 46). All of these passages fit well into the narratives. Yet, at the same time they address the audience directly.

The most obvious way in which Luke develops an ideal in prayer is through the narrative progression. In Luke the relation to Jesus is tied more closely to the progression of the plot than in the other Gospels, especially when it comes to prayer (hence point b, paradigmatic aspects of the character of Jesus, and e, narrative progression, are discussed together). The infancy narrative prepares the foundation using language steeped in the OT and its piety. Jesus and his followers are nothing other than heirs of pious Israel. In this trustworthy setting, Jesus is introduced, and recognised, as the Saviour. From the start of the ministry narrative Jesus emerges as a figure with an intimate rapport with God (3:21; 5:16). He is given characterisation as 'Son' in the earlier parts of the narrative (3:22; 9:35), and later picks this up in the address of God as 'Father' in the later part of the narrative (10:21; 22:42; 23:34, 46).[264] Although he at first searches solitude in prayer (5:16), he gradually includes the disciples in his life of prayer (6:12–13; 9:18; 9:28–29). Interestingly, this occurs after he has appointed some of them as apostles (6:12–13). Some of these apostles

[263] So Edmonds 1979–80, 140–43. Cf. Likewise Holmås: "In short, the Lord's Prayer encourages the disciples to trustful reliance on God with respect to those matters most urgent for faithful Christian living." Holmås 2011, 134.

[264] Feldkämper 1978, 334.

are even actively brought with him at the prayer-scene on the Mount of Transfiguration. A further step is taken in the travel narrative when Jesus commands them to pray (10:2). Having witnessed Jesus and his communion with God the disciples finally ask for specific teaching on prayer (11:1), and receive it (11:2–13; 18:1–14). At this stage of the narrative, the disciples grow in discipleship and follow Jesus where he goes. This positive picture is reversed in the passion narrative. There Jesus withdraws to pray alone. The disciples do not truly understand his communion with God; therefore they do not understand his calling. Instead of praying with Jesus, they meet the passion with violence. The effect is to show that nothing short of an act of God is able to lead the disciples into a new relation to him. After the crucifixion and resurrection they see Jesus for who he is and worship him (24:52). In Acts they are shown receiving the Holy Spirit, who among other things gives inspired speech, part of which is prayer. Now they can follow Jesus, and pray as he taught as shown by the parallel between the prayers of Acts and those in the Gospel (Lk 3:21–22//Acts 1:14; 2:1–4, Lk 6:12–13//Acts 1:24–26; 13:2–3, Lk 23:34//Acts 7:60). The prayer passages of Acts are all in agreement with the picture given in the Gospel (Acts 1:14; 2:42; 3:1; 6:4, 6; 10:4, 9, 30–31; 12:5, 12; 16:13, 16, 25; 20:36; 21:5; 22:17; 28:8).[265] Altogether, the result is to portray the disciples after the cross and resurrection as sharing in Jesus' relation with the Father.

Luke uses material from traditional Jewish piety and the Temple in the construction of an ideal pray-er (point c: ideals from the Old Testament). This is obvious from the very start with the tone set in the prayer-songs of the infancy narrative. There covenant language and a psalmic tone are used to show Jesus' continuity with and fulfilment of faithful Jewish piety. The psalmic language is later continued in those prayers of Jesus with a recorded content (10:21–22; 22:39–46; 23:46; cf. likewise 18:9–14). The primary OT type used in the prayer-material is that of Moses to whom Jesus is at times likened (9:28–36, and prayers on mountains).[266] In Luke there is a progress from the Temple (1:10; 24:53) and outward to "the ends of the world" (Acts 1:8). Yet, this seemingly straightforward development includes the end of the religious function of the Temple for the community of Jesus' followers. Jesus comes to take the place of the Temple for the disciples. Just like God is present in the Temple (1 Kgs 8:11; 2 Chr 5:14) and

[265] For details cf. Feldkämper 1978, 306–332. For discussions of the function of parallels in Luke-Acts see Talbert 1974; Maddox 1982, 9–12. For a discussion of how the prayer texts supports the unity of Luke-Acts cf. Holmås 2011, 160–165.

[266] Moessner 1989.

descends on sacrifices (1 Kgs 18:38), he now descends on the followers of Jesus (Acts 2:2–4). Arguably, the prayers become the single most important point of continuity between the followers of Jesus and the people of Israel.[267] The status of the "old covenant" is not altogether clear in Luke (22:20 speaks of a "new covenant"). Zechariah receives an answer to his prayer (1:13), and the tax-collector goes home "righteous" (18:14). In this the 'us' and 'them' aspect is not as explicit as in Matthew. Yet, the new covenant is singularly based on the salvific works of Jesus.

That Luke works with an implied audience who knows the basic narrative is clear from the incipit in 1:1–4 (point d: play on pre-knowledge). In Luke the notion of an "implicit narrative" is stronger than in the preceding two Gospels. The Gospel of Luke is presented as the highpoint of a larger narrative of God's work. This narrative is based on the OT (see discussion under point c). Compared to the other Gospels, Luke is more explicit on the plan that God is thought to work according to. As noted in the introduction, the term 'salvation history' has been used to describe this dynamic. Luke is the only Gospel which explicitly names an implied reader. Theophilus has already received teaching, presumably on the basics of the faith. The writings of Luke are to bring "surety" (ἀσφάλεια) as to the reliability of that teaching (1:4). This introduction immediately constructs an implied audience who already knows the outcome of the narrative and therefore the truth about the character of Jesus. The characters of the narrative struggle to ascertain the identity of Jesus, and to follow him in the right manner. The implied audience already knows both and is thereby "sure" about how to respond to the narrative. Each scene therefore implicitly communicates to the implied audience and influences it to continually make the right choices. After the cross and resurrection the characters of the narrative gain a new knowledge of Jesus and are empowered to follow him. This makes them witnesses appealing to the audience, and at the same time act as models for the audience.[268]

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[267] Cf. Klaus Berger: "Begreiflich wird auch, weshalb Lukas wie kein anderer neutestamentlicher Autor jüdische Gebetstraditionen aufnimmt und das Gebet Jesu wie der Gemeinde überall so stark betont, denn hier liegt für ihn der Schlüssel der Kontinuität von Judentum und Christentum. Durch das Gebet wird für ihn die alles entscheidende Verbindung mit den jüdischen Tempel praktisch realisiert." Berger *TRE* 12:53. Likewise Plymale 1991, 22. This would also constitute a political argument claiming for Christianity the status of a *religio licita*.

[268] Marguerat has shown how the implicit communication about God, left in the hands of witnesses, makes Luke's theology "a theology of the hidden God, who reveals himself by veiling himself: It is the work of the witness that must pierce the uncertainty." Marguerat 2002, 102.

Luke uses different tools of characterisation to construct an ideal pray-er (point f: characterisation). As just argued, the construction of the ideal pray-er is above all accomplished through the narrative progression which relates the disciples to the character of Jesus. Jesus has a unique role in God's plan of salvation, and aspects of the prayer-material reveal his unique character. Nowhere in the Gospel does Jesus pray together *with* the disciples. He teaches them and prays for them. The disciples on their part end up worshipping him (24:50–53) and addressing prayers *to* him (Acts 7:59–60; cf. also 19:17). Placed next to Mark, it becomes clear that Jesus seems to be more in control in Luke, more static. Jesus' whole ministry is presented as a result of his life of prayer with regards to the power at work behind it and in the direction and guidance he receives, as well as in the way he directs it himself.[269] More than in the other Synoptics, the prayer-material is used Christologically to say something about who Jesus *is*. He prays at all times and is in constant communion with the Father. Jesus in his person reveals a relationship to the Father, partly through prayer. At the same time, or as part of this, the character of Jesus is also used paradigmatically. The disciples are expected to imitate Jesus (6:40, 46), yet this is not only a question of doing what he does. Jesus exemplifies in his life the correct way to live dependent upon the Father. Prayer takes him to the cross in faithful obedience.[270]

A significant aspect of the Lucan construction of an ideal pray-er is the way characters other than Jesus are used to exemplify it. In general the characters are more transparent than in the other two Synoptics. They are all contained within the narrative and fill their functions within it (no Rufuses as in Mk 15:21). Even the addressee Theophilus is ideal as the "lover of God." In the infancy narrative Mary, Simeon and Anna are examples of faithful Jewish piety. Luke presents a more congenial picture of the disciples than Mark and Matthew; they are models for the audience. These characters exemplify correct response to Jesus and God. Central in this use of other characters is the presentation of weak characters as ideal. In general, Luke includes sinners (5:8), tax-collectors (5:27), and women (8:2–3) within the group of Jesus' disciples. Jesus brings good news to the poor (4:18). In the explicit prayer-teaching, Mary is the prime example. Further examples are the widow of 18:1–8, and the tax-collector of 18:9–14. The emphasis on the weak is even exemplified by the disciples who fail,

269 Cf. Lampe 1955, 169; Kealy 1979, 93.
270 Green 1990. Argues that Jesus' death is a paradigm for discipleship.

only to be redeemed after the cross, especially Peter. Contrastive characterisation adds to this picture by presenting the proud, haughty, and demanding as anti-ideals (infancy narrative, 18:1–14; 22:31–32).

Like the other Synoptics, Luke's conception of prayer only makes sense in the context of eschatology (point g: eschatology). In Luke the eschatology has a different nuance than in either Matthew or Mark. Luke shares the basic notion of a salvation which is not fully realised at present.[271] At the same time, the Gospel conscripts eschatology in the service of discipleship. Luke describes the present effects of the eschatological salvation for the relationship to God and prayer. This is the reason why the character of Jesus can take a more paradigmatic role. Another emphasis of Luke is the way prayer is described as waiting (especially 18:1–8). Delay is basic to prayer, and provides an opportunity to exercise faith. Possibly this stems from a need to address a community with wrong conceptions of the *Parousia* and its dating. A more present eschatology can be thought to shine through in the spatial language. At the baptism, the spiritual elements are explicitly visible (3:21), at the Mount of Olives angels appear and serve Jesus when he prays (22:43). The divine or angelic can be seen and heard at the same spatial level as other events. The use of sensory language is in agreement with Luke's program of presenting a witness to salvation (1:2). Such language also gives a special nuance to prayer in Luke. Prayer makes humans agents on a cosmic stage that goes beyond that of the earthly, everyday life; or rather, the earthly everyday life is actually part of a much larger complex. Prayer bridges the divine and human realms—now.

Description of the Ideal Pray-er

It has often been emphasised that Luke is concerned with discipleship. The carefully crafted picture of an ideal suggests that character building is a major concern in the Gospel.[272] Of the canonical Gospels, it is only in Luke that prayer is *the* central act of piety. Luke constructs a proper

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[271] Some passages seem to tone done imminent expectations in Luke (compare Mk 1:15 and Lk 4.15 or Mk 9:1 and Lk 9:27). However, pace Conzelmann 1961, there are also in Luke indications of "imminence" (3:7–9, 16–17; 10:9–11; 17:22–37; 21:31–32). "In early Judaism and early Christianity eschatological beliefs were often linked with a sense of urgency in view of the imminent expectation of the end of the age, although the degree of urgency or imminence varies in accordance with the particular social situation in which such beliefs are thought meaningful (e.g., persecution, feelings of alienation, etc.)." Aune *ABD* 2:594.

[272] Cf. Green 1990. Discipleship makes total claims cf. Lk 9:23; 14:33; 16:13; 18:16–17.

response to the gospel, in a different way than Matthew. In Mark the disciples' failure is used to emphasise the greatness of Jesus' victory.[273] Luke is more positive. In this Gospel with its focus on the present aspects of eschatology, the followers of Jesus continue to walk with him on the Way (Acts 9:11). One of the major ways to respond to Jesus' call to be like him (6:40) is to become a pray-er. However, this means that also for Luke discipleship is in the hands of God who leads by the Holy Spirit, and answers prayer.

Luke presents a number of different words to be used, and aspects to be prayed for. In the main these correspond to the prayer-teaching found in Matthew. The prayer in 11:2–4 is the most explicit description of what should be prayed. This brings with it particular ideals for each and every one of the petitions. These are discussed in the exegesis. Other important subjects for prayer are: workers for the harvest (10:2), The Holy Spirit (11:13 unique to Luke), not to be led into temptation (22:40, 46). The Lucan ideal pray-er can be described with regards to two interdependent categories: covenant and salvation.

To Luke prayer is a covenant act. With the infancy narrative the Gospel is placed in a setting of faithful OT covenant piety and the Temple. The covenantal and psalmic tone is continued throughout. To Luke, prayer is offered on account of God's salvific acts which invite into a covenant relationship. The general covenantal language is made specific in the singular focus on Jesus who instigates a new covenant (22:20). The picture of faithful Israel in the infancy narrative ends with the followers of Jesus worshipping in the Temple. At this stage, Jesus has been included in their devotion (24:50–53). To Luke the promise to Abraham is fulfilled in Jesus (Acts 3:22–26), and his followers are part of 'true Israel.'[274] The emphasis on servanthood supports this covenantal understanding of Luke's program (cf. the infancy narrative; Acts 3:13, 26; 4:27, 30). The followers of Jesus serve God and partake in his work through prayer. The repeated call for perseverance in prayer suggests that, to Luke, prayer maintains and pursues the covenant relationship. In this light, delay and suffering are understood as testing of the covenant relationship, enabling the pray-er to remain faithful. It is in this context that the eschatology is best understood.

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[273] Certainly all the Gospels are theocentric. Still, they emphasise different aspects in this regard.

[274] As noted, the status of the old covenant is not explicitly discussed. Cf. Rom 9–11.

Through prayer the human covenant partner approaches God in an attitude of humility. In the address of God as King and Father, the pray-er self-refers as subject and child. A similar form of self-characterisation is found in the petitions for forgiveness, pointing to the pray-er's sinfulness. To Luke humility is a central ideal, and it is exemplified in humble characters at prayer—weak ideals (like the tax collector in 18:9–14). The result is to paint a picture where all have access to God through the prayer enabled by Jesus. This aspect is almost taken so far as to present a picture where those who are well off in society, whether religiously or financially, are at a disadvantage in aspects of piety. This seems to be the conclusion to draw from the negative anti-ideals used to further what is deemed normative (1:51, 52, 53; 10:21–22; 18:9–14; 20:47). Jesus himself is a type of this in his suffering sacrifice. The humble pray-er is in continuous dependence upon God in all areas of life.[275] Such an ideal places the main responsibility for the initiation and up-keeping of the covenant on the character of God.

To Luke the covenant with God also implies that the human partner has the right to approach God. This is emphasised in a number of parables (11:5–8; 18:1–14). God is portrayed as having a personal interest in the pray-er. The pray-er is to persistently approach God as the source of salvation in all areas of life. The frames of the covenant are set out, but this does not imply that the relationship is to be conceived of as mechanical. God knows the needs of the disciples (12:27), still they are commanded to pray (11:9–11). The parables just mentioned also emphasise perseverance. The result is to construct a picture of personal interaction. The character of Jesus is also used in this manner in the Gethsemane scene which shows his struggle. In Luke, prayer is a dialogue with God.[276]

God's role as Saviour is basic to the Lucan perception of 'covenant.' Prayer is also connected to the Lucan soteriology.[277] The introductory section displays the distinction often made between Jesus as a paradigmatic, and as a unique pray-er. Most of the scholars presented agree that, in Luke, prayer is somehow connected to salvation. In the exegesis it has been seen that the paradigmatic and soteriological functions of Jesus overlap. The

[275] So Johnson 1991, 24. From infancy narrative to Acts, "What begins in his account as a manifestation of Temple piety is made into a characteristic of Christian life—dependence on God and his Anointed, manifested now on both a common and an individual basis as a mode of communing with them." Fitzmyer 1981, 247.

[276] Feldkämper 1978, 333, 337.

[277] Salvation has been seen as *the* unifying element of Luke. Cf. Marshall 1970; Johnson 1991, 23; Marshall 1991, 273; Bovon 2002, 10.

salvific act of God in Jesus at the cross, resurrection, and outpouring of the Spirit is the basis of salvation. The salvation Jesus brings is the new kingdom with its share in hope and forgiveness. To be a disciple is to respond to this and be changed in following Jesus. This process of change is not separate from the saving work of Christ, but rather depends upon it. In this context, the life of Jesus is a type of how to live before God, not one of ethics *per se*. Jesus reveals the Father, and in that his own relation to the Father. That revealed relation spells out what a true relationship to the Father is like. On this account, Jesus' paradigmatic role is equally soteriological.[278] In Luke, this is the case as the prayers of Jesus' followers participate in his relation to the Father.[279]

The thought of a covenant also brings with it stipulations of how the partners are to fulfil it. Luke calls for a particular response to his Gospel, often using such terms as "repentance" (5:32; 13:3; 24:47) and "faith" (8:12–13).[280] As already intimated, Luke argues that God fulfils the demands of the covenant at both ends. Covenant and salvation come together in the thought of 'salvation' as being able to serve God in holiness and righteousness (1:71–75). This is possible on account of Jesus' saving works, which free the people from sin (1:77) and instigate a new covenant (22:20). God is hence enabling the human partner to be true to the covenant. The followers of Jesus are accepted as children of his Father.[281] It is in this sense also that the pray-er shares in God's work. They do the work of their Father (6:28). Prayer safeguards the pray-er at the Day of Judgment (18:1–8; 21:32; 22:39–46 with 12:37). Prayer is not, in and of itself, what leads to safety, rather it is the answer which grants strength to stand (21:36). Luke emphasises that discipleship and the present requirements of eschatology are works of God.

Throughout Luke the Holy Spirit is connected to prayer. This is clear in the way the Holy Spirit inspires the utterances of the prayer-songs of the infancy narrative (1:67; 2:25), the prayer before the choosing of the disciples (6:12–13 with Acts 1:2), and Jesus' cry of jubilation (10:21). These could all be seen as instances of prophetic speech, an aspect which is emphasised in Acts (Acts 2:1–40, and throughout). In this form of speech

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278 Kurz 1990, 171–189. Barrett argues against the *Imitatio Christi* model. Barrett 1994, 251–262. I argue that *imitatio* belongs with *participatio*.

279 "Somit ist das Beten der Jünger ein durch Jesus vermitteltes und ermöglichtes Beten. Sie beten *wie* er, *zu* ihm und *durch* ihn." Feldkämper 1978, 338.

280 On repentance cf. Méndez-Moratalla 2004. Tannehill 2004, 199–215.

281 The address "Father" implies a "durative" relationship. Ostmeyer 2006, 314.

God is somehow thought to be speaking through the prophet. To Luke the Holy Spirit is an agent of revelation and is instrumental in bringing forth praise to God. That the Holy Spirit is equally instrumental in aiding the disciples in fulfilling Jesus' ministry (Acts 1:8) shows that this character is central in God's plan for salvation. Luke emphasises the need for the disciples to pray to receive the Holy Spirit. Altogether this suggests that, to Luke, prayer is a work of the Holy Spirit who brings forth words in the pray-er.[282] The response of prayer is on this account a gift from the Father through the Holy Spirit (on the Holy Spirit as gift cf. 11:13; Acts 2:38; 8:20; 10:45; 11:17; cf. Rom 8:26).[283] Such a reading is supported by the observation that the response of repentance is also a cause for rejoicing (Lk 5:27–29; 15:5–7; 19:6, 8) and a gift (Acts 5:31; 10:43; 11:18; 15:9).[284] Jesus enables a new relation to God.

Some Further Anthropological Reflections

Luke's emphasis on the physicality of that which is recounted means that in this teaching, physical existence is not something to avoid or transcend, it is basic to human existence. This is a natural corollary of the incarnation as presented at the outset of the narrative (1:26–38). The communication with God depends on creation, which thereby harbours a sacramental potential. In Luke, God is thought to communicate through creation from a position outside it. Creation and humans in it change according to God's plan of salvation. Hence, the present world changes according to the new reality evident in Jesus' resurrection and ascension. As regards eschatology, Luke puts slightly more emphasis on its realised aspects compared to the other Synoptics. Still, there are decisive aspects of salvation which await completion, a fact that gives humans a teleology. Ultimately, Jesus is this ideal to which the other characters progress. In him, the likeness of God is realised in humanity.

As already argued, the presentation of salvation in Jesus requires a present un-redeemed state. The needs of humans are defined in such aspects

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[282] Christian prayer and reception of the Spirit are a "secondary participation" in Jesus' intimate relationship. Nolland 1989, 160.

[283] The Holy Spirit addresses God the Father, on account of Jesus' work, through the disciples.

[284] Where this leaves human freedom could be discussed. In all cases the freedom not to pray is left open. Rejoicing is not a prevalent theme in the Lucan prayer-teaching. There is even the saying that the disciples will not celebrate but fast (and pray?) when Jesus is absent (5:33).

as freedom from sin, the presence of the kingdom and the Spirit. The existence portrayed is actually one of incompleteness, lack and weakness. Humanity is only fully realised as far as it relates to God in dynamic interaction. The present lack is set to be overcome eschatologically, whilst the incompleteness is more basic to human existence. Humans are only properly defined with regards to their relationship with Jesus and the Father, a major part of which is prayer.

The salvific work of Jesus implies that humans are defined from outside of themselves. The basis of their existence is the salvation received through Jesus. At the same time, prayer implies humanity's necessary involvement in that process. To Luke, salvation is a process the follower of Jesus is actively involved in.[285] The pray-er is included in God's grand renewing plan of salvation through faith. The pray-er is changed in the dialogue of prayer. To Luke this vision of a changed humanity is exemplified by the transfiguration, a prayer-experience. There Jesus, representative of humanity, communes with God with a changed "face" (πρόσωπον 9:29).

[285] Cf. the notion of *synergeia* (cf. 1 Cor 3:9; 15:10) which is used in Orthodox theology to describe a process in which the human being actively accepts God's offer of salvation and is thereby transformed and united to the divine (*theosis* cf. 2 Pet 1:14; differentiated from *apotheosis*). Cf. Meyendorf 1996, 175; Neuner 2008, 271–273.

CHAPTER FIVE

JOHN

Introduction

John is different from the Synoptics, so also in the texts pertaining to prayer.[1] A number of short comparisons can be produced to exemplify the differences.[2] In contrast to the Synoptics, John never uses the more religious terminology for prayer (like προσεύχομαι or δέομαι).[3] Rather a simple 'ask' is used throughout. One Greek term is used for Jesus' address of God (ἐρωτάω), another for the disciples' (αἰτέω).[4] That this is intended as an indication of the different relationships Jesus and the disciples have to God is suggested by the distinction made between Jesus as "Son" (υἱός used throughout and μονογενής 1:14) and the disciples as "children" (τέκνα 1:12; 11:52; 13:33). The instruction on prayer is quite different in tone from that found in and around the "Our Father" (Jn 13–16). There is no mention that Jesus withdraws to pray during his ministry. There is even the statement that Jesus does not have to pray (11:41–42). Such comparisons bring interesting material to the surface, but the picture John presents must above all be examined in its own right.[5] The material that is there is just as great a challenge to interpret as that which is not. John presents a distinct picture of how the disciples and audience relate to the Father; that the prayer material is also distinct is to be expected. However, that

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[1] I know of no monographs devoted to prayer in John. Unpublished dissertations include: Bingham Hunter 1979 (Aberdeen); Diehl 2007 (Edinburgh).

[2] As concerns the historical traditions behind John, I follow Percival Gardner-Smith's argument that it is easier to explain the similarities by a common oral tradition than the differences by John's use of the Synoptics. Gardner-Smith 1938. Basically followed by Dodd 1963, 423. Cf. also Dodd 1953, 444–453. However, the case is too complex to produce a catch-all theory. Cf. for instance Brown's discussion of units from the Synoptics which John spreads out. Brown 1961. Brown's argument for a gradual development with different stages seems reasonable. Brown 1979. Followed by Painter 1993, 2. Possibly this tradition goes back to eyewitnesses. So Hengel 1989, 133–135; Smalley 1998, 1–44; Motyer 2006, 194. Cf. Jn 21:24.

[3] Ostmeyer 2004, 333.

[4] Cf. Ostmeyer 2006, 329. Some passages need an explanation to fit this scheme: 11:22; 16:23; 1 Joh 5:16.

[5] Following Dunn, I will "let John be John." Dunn 1983. The discussion of John's place in early Christianity will by necessity be a part of the discussion, yet not as an end in itself.

the prayer-teaching is not contradictory to that of the Synoptic Gospels, and that it shares a number of basic traits with them will be argued in the concluding chapter.

Like the Synoptics, John addresses the audience implicitly with an outsider-insider distinction. The Gospel shares their differentiation between the pre- and post-resurrection understanding of Jesus.[6] At the same time, the distinction between those who follow Jesus and understand his revelation and those who do not is greater than in the Synoptics (cf. for instance the language of being "born from above" 3:1–15). In John the heavenly reality of Jesus is more evident throughout the narrative. In the fourth Gospel, theology (or "myth") and history come together like in no other NT text. Jesus speaks openly (16:25, 29) and is still misunderstood. The characters of the narrative do not understand the continuous hints at Jesus' exalted status which was communicated to the audience in the introduction. Throughout the narrative, this reality is further developed through the use of symbolical language. Compared to the Synoptics, the different theological tone of John makes for a different construction of an ideal pray-er.

The Gospel of John is commonly divided into a book of signs (1:19–12:50) and a book of glory (13:1–20:31).[7] However, Jesus' death and resurrection are surely the most prominent signs, and the recognition of the task ahead is never far from the character of Jesus in the first section (The lifted up sayings of 3:14; 8:28; 12:32 are equal to the Synoptic passion predictions).[8] Still, the two part division is helpful in interpretation, and the passion *does* come more into focus with the farewell discourse. In contrast, Segovia uses a threefold division based on the pattern of ancient biographies: "a narrative of origins (1:1–18), a narrative of the public life or career of Jesus (1:19–17:26), and a narrative of death and lasting significance (18:1–21:25)."[9] This would seem to place more focus on the ministry than on the passion

[6] Martyn recognises that his approach of a split level drama means that "only the reflective scholar intent on analyzing the Gospel will discover the seams which the Evangelist sewed together so deftly. True exegesis demands, therefore, that we recognize a certain tension between our analysis and John's intentions." Martyn 1979, 131. In contrast I will here follow the argument that "it is common in early Christian exegesis to have two referents, one ostensive ("historical") and one ideal ("spiritual"), but never do we find in a narrative text two ostensive referents, both on the same chronological plane." Klink 2007, 131–132.

[7] Brown 1966, cxxxviii–cxxxix; Dodd 1953, 289. The sections seem to be divided by climactic conclusions: 1:18; 12:36b–50; 20:30–31; 21:24–25. So Bernard 1928, xxiii.

[8] The result must be that the later part of the narrative is equally for the world, not only the disciples.

[9] Segovia 1991, 23.

of Jesus. On a different level, the travel pattern provides a geographical organisation of the material (1:19–3:36; 4:1–5:47; 6:1–10:42; 11:1–17:26).[10] Others again suggest that the overall outline is based on preaching.[11] The introduction gives the text a literal tone, which has made some suggest that it is akin to an ancient drama.[12] The simple progression from the ministry of Jesus to the passion is deemed sufficient for our purposes.[13] Following this outline the goal of the whole work is the passion and resurrection.[14]

Signs Narrative 1:19–12:50

The early narrative starts to describe what the prologue displays in outline. The character of Jesus is developed in several scenes where a number of supporting characters meet and respond to him.[15] Their misunderstandings aid in developing the true picture of Jesus for the audience, whether through direct authorial comment or implicitly. The initial scenes (especially up to ch. 4) appear to be more positive than the later ones. The incomprehension of other characters increases as he approaches the cross. It is after the resurrection that a full realisation of his nature is possible (20:28). The early scenes start to build an ideal response to Jesus. In the early narrative there is some mention of prayer as such, and one passage that deals with 'true worship.' However, explicit teaching on prayer is reserved for the revelatory discourse Jesus delivers in face of his death (Chs. 13–17).

4:19–26 True Worship

Although this passage does not deal explicitly with petitionary prayer it is helpful as a background to the later such passages, particularly as the Synoptics connect the themes of Temple and Spirit to prayer. Verses

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[10] Rissi 1983, 48–54; Staley 1988, 50–73.

[11] Lindars 1971. Cf. also Guilding 1960; Beasley-Murray 1987, xlii.

[12] Stibbe 1994.

[13] Against the prevalent view that ch. 21 is an addition not in line with Johannine theology I read the present Gospel as a coherent literary text. Cf. Thyen who adopts a similar approach in his commentary. Thyen 2005, 1, 4, 777–796.

[14] Schnackenburg 1975, 1.

[15] For a discussion of *anagnorisis* scenes cf. Culpepper 1983, 77–148; Painter 1993; Culpepper 1998, 67–86. Cf. also Aristotle *Poet.* 1452a. Examples include: Oedipus; Gen 18; Judg 6:11–24; 2 Sam 12:5. Cf. also Lk 24:13f. In John the knowledge in question comes from revelation and is previously unknown, it is not the recuperation of knowledge somehow lost for a period of time.

19–26 are the climax of a larger chiastic structure (1–44).[16] The scene is neatly composed with Jesus and another character interacting, with the companions moving in towards the end and the villagers as a sort of chorus. In Johannine fashion, the scene develops the Christology through symbolism. Jesus addresses the woman at the well, and at the same time a more abstract spiritual discourse is developed as he speaks past her understanding (4:10–26).[17] This second level of discourse addresses an (implied) audience directly. The highpoint of the chiasm in verses 1–44 appears to be the description of a new relationship to God now available, described as the possibility of worshipping (προσκυνέω) as "true worshippers" (προσκυνηταί). The Greek terms in themselves are seldom used for cultic worship in the LXX, supporting the view that the prayer-language in itself is an indication of John's construction of novelty (see ἐρωτάω and αἰτέω above; cf. also Mt 28:16–20; Lk 24:50–53).[18]

In this scene, Jesus is progressively described as a thirsty man, a Jew, a teacher, one greater than Jacob, a prophet, the Messiah and the Saviour (and ἐγώ εἰμι v. 26).[19] As will be argued throughout this chapter, the construction of an ideal pray-er is achieved in tandem with the Christology. Jerusalem and Gerizim (vv. 20, 22) are used as a point of departure for the presentation of a new relation to God where Jesus, "the true bridegroom" (cf. 2:9–10; 3:29), and his gifts (v. 14; cf. 19:34) constitute the central elements.[20] He will be (cf. fut. in v. 21) the Temple (2:18–22).[21] The lumping together of the cult places points to the universal aspect of John's dualism (cf. 7:33–36; 12:20–26).[22] The claims pertain to all, and so does the offer of salvation (3:16). John has already recounted how the Word became flesh and tabernacled on earth (1:14), how God is present in Jesus (1:51), and that he is the true Temple (2:21).[23] This focus on Jesus as the locus of the new

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[16] So Coloe 2001, 86. cf. further Ellis 1984, 66–76. For source issues cf. Okure 1988, 58–64.

[17] Schnackenburg 1965, 462.

[18] So Ostmeyer 2006, 323. Ostmeyer also shows that in the LXX the term is seldom used in connection with the Temple.

[19] Cf. Findlay 1956, 61. It is not certain that v. 19, "you are a prophet" is a positive characterisation. The Samaritans did not recognise the prophetic books, and her designation could mean "you are a Jew." Okure 1988, 114.

[20] The meeting at the well is a "biblical type scene." So Alter 1981, 51–52. Cf. Olsson 1974, 172.

[21] Thyen 2005, 257.

[22] Samaria is part of his bride. In this scene, Jesus crosses the borders of gender, nationality, race, and religion. So Culpepper 1998, 139. Cf. 7:33–36; 12:20–20.

[23] For Jesus as the new Temple cf. Coloe 2001. The Odes of Solomon and some Qumran texts are equally critical of the Temple (*Odes Sol.* 12:4; 20:14; 1QS 9:3–5). Cf. also Meye Thompson 2006, 260–261.

relationship to God is further developed as the narrative progresses. Further explanations of how the worship of God is worked out *in* Jesus can be found in the later teaching on prayer (cf. especially chs. 13–17).

The new worship which Jesus enables is conducted in "Spirit" and in "truth" (vv. 21, 23; for Jesus as truth cf. 14:6). It is not connected to a particular geographical location.[24] In this passage, the new life is symbolised through the gift of living water which the followers of Jesus receive (vv. 10, 14).[25] This "water" should, in the context of John, be understood as The Holy Spirit (cf. 7:37–39. For δωρεά as The Holy Spirit cf. Acts 2:38; 8:20; 10:45; 11:17).[26] Read as a sign of the Holy Spirit this water should be understood as symbolical of revelation (cf. Pr 13:14; 18:4; Is 55:1–11 for the connection between water and revelation).[27] The Holy Spirit is later presented as the Parclete who will reveal Jesus (14:25–26; 15:26–27; 16:7–15) As regards piety it is important that the gift leads naturally to true worship.[28] To John, God seeks true worship, and is at the same time the one who enables it through this gift (ζητεῖ in v. 23 is a response-inviting construction). The agent of its completion is Jesus who is instrumental in the outpouring of the Spirit (14:16–17; 15:26).[29] As will be seen, Jesus reveals God through revealing his own relationship to him (in which the disciples are included).[30] As God is now properly revealed he can be properly worshipped.[31]

From the statement that "God is Spirit" it follows as a logical necessity that "those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth" (v. 24).

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[24] "Konstitutiv für die rechte Proskynese ist nicht der Ort, sondern die durch Jesus als Messias ermöglichte Anbetung des Vaters im Geist und in der Warheit." Ostmeyer 2006, 323. Cf. also Schnackenburg 1965, 474.

[25] Cf. the water flowing from the new Temple (Ez 47:1–12). Coloe 2001, 94–96. Water connotes purification and forgiveness before God. So Olsson 1974, 215. Cf. Is 44:3; Joel 2:28; Ez 36:25–27.

[26] The water is the Spirit. So Jones 1997, 229.

[27] "The Spirit of truth is the agent who interprets Jesus' revelation or teaching to men (14;26; 16:13)." Brown 1966, 178.

[28] It seems probable that "in Spirit and truth" in v. 23 is a hendiadys (Spirit of Truth). Cf. 1QS 4:21 "Like purifying waters He will sprinkle upon him the spirit of truth."

[29] So Thyen 2005, 263.

[30] "Definiert wird damit freilich nicht jeweils ein abstraktes, 'Wesen' Gottes, sondern seine verlässliche Relation zu dem Menschen und seine Gabe von Geist, Licht und Liebe an sie." Thyen 2005, 263.

[31] John is centred on revelation. So Bultmann 1955, 52; Forestell 1974; Barrett 1978, 73; 514–553; O'Day 1986; Ashton 1993. I agree with Bultmann and Loader that John does not primarily have a revelation-information model but a revelation-encounter model. Loader 1992, 12. However, the revelation of a relationship must by necessity also include personal 'knowledge' of the persons involved, not only the *daß* of revelation.

This appears more as an argument based on nature than on possession of a particular propositional revelation. It appears as a "like knows like" argument, similar to that found in Jesus' prayer utterance in Luke 10:21–22 and Matthew 11:25–26. The logical construction with the use of "must" (δεῖ) implies that the followers of Jesus must by necessity worship in Spirit and truth since that is God's nature (dif. use than in Lk 18:1).[32] The revelation of Jesus brings a new relationship since it changes those who receive it. The OT texts on an inner transformation effected by God appear to shine through in this argument (cf. Jer 31:29–34; Ez 36:25–27; Joel 2:28–32). In John, the ideal is accomplished by God and comes to humans from outside them, it is completely other. It is not accomplished through the Temple or Gerizim, but only by being born by the Father (vv. 21, 23 cf. 1:12; 3:5–15; 1 Jn 3:1–3), "from above" (ἄνωθεν 3:3, 5).[33] The new relation to God implies a whole new way of being human. God, being unique and separate from "the world" (κόσμος), changes humans in order to receive appropriate worship.[34] This sets a particular frame for the later prayer-teaching.

6:11 Blessing at the Feeding Miracle

As in the Synoptics a short reference to prayer is also found in the Johannine feeding miracle.[35] In similar fashion Jesus is depicted as giving thanks at meals also here. This characterises him as a Jewish male who follows proper custom. Throughout the Gospel OT themes and passages are integrated into the theology. This can for instance be seen in the strong integration of the Temple into the Christology. There is some tension in the singular focus on Jesus' uniqueness which at times could be read as a distinction vis-a-vis tradition.[36] However, John emphasises the "spiritual" aspects of piety over a description of its exact physical outworking. This makes any conclusion on such matters tentative and in reality unsubstantiated.

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[32] The Synoptics can be thought to devote more place to developing a proper response, whereas John focuses on the new anthropological reality.

[33] Lindars 1972, 189.

[34] The distinction is not an inner-outer dichotomy as such. "L'Ancien Testament, tout en maintenant la nécessité du culte extérieur traditionel, a insisté fortement sur l'inutilité des sacrifices sans l'attachement à Dieux et aux règles de la morale (Is. 1:11; 29:13; Jer 6:20; Amos 5:20–26; Ps 1:7–23)." Lagrange 1925, 113. Cf. also Hos 6:6; 8:13; Ps 50:14, 23; 51:16–17; 141:2; Prov 16:6; Jer 7:1–8:3; Mic 6:6–8; Sir 35:1; Tob 4:10–11; 1 QS 9:3–5; 2 Enoch 45:3.

[35] Note the absence of prayer in Jesus' withdrawal to the mountain in 6:15. This differs from the Synoptics (cf. Mk 6:46). Codex Bezae (D) adds what is probably a harmonisation "and there he prayed."

[36] Cf. for instance the highlighting of "grace and truth" (1:17) over "law," in contrast to Matthew's emphasis that Jesus refines the law (5:17). So Ashton 1993, 473.

Throughout the Gospel, Jesus is intimately connected to God (4:34; 5:19–27; 6:38). His acts are those of God and his will is one with God's (cf. 17:24 "I desire that…"). In that sense, Jesus does not ask the Father for miracles, he just performs them. Still, there is an effort to frame these acts in a relationship which includes prayer. This is more evident in the later references to prayer (especially 11:22, 41–42).

In the following discourse John hints at the last supper and its religious implications. The use of such metaphors as "bread of life" (vv. 35 and 51) explicitly places the miracle scene in the context of later praxis. John uses a three step progression from bread of miracle, to manna, to the "Eucharist" (cf. εὐχαριστήσας) in v. 11.[37] The whole discourse ends on the person of Jesus himself who is the food which gives life (vv. 51–58 in contrast to the Synoptics' focus on the kingdom). Thereby the miracle is used as a springboard to discuss the unity of the disciples with Jesus. The present religious experience of the audience is construed as an interpretation of the life of Jesus. Each individual scene adds to the Christology, and therefore in the end, to the devotion due to Jesus. The negative reactions to the speech cement the true interpretation of the implied author and the implied audience.[38]

9:31 The Pharisees Do Not Know Jesus

This verse is placed in the midst of a heated argument on who Jesus is.[39] The progressive characterisation of Jesus in this scene is similar to that at the Samaritan well. He is "the man called Jesus" 9:11–12, "a prophet" v. 17, "sent from God" v. 33, "Son of Man" v. 35, and finally "Lord" (κύριος) v. 38.[40] Yet, even with the progressive revelation of Jesus, there seems to be a limited realisation of who he is. The discussion involves two outsiders and is not a self-revelation on the part of Jesus. The statement is thus to be seen as a general thought on how Jesus must be since God answered his prayer. The thought that God listens to those who are pious is quite a common argument in the OT (Is 1:15; Ps 66:18; 109:7; Prov 15:29; Job 27:9;

[37] The "eating" of his flesh must refer to the "Eucharist."

[38] Burge 2006, 246.

[39] This was a central text in Martyn's description of a two level drama with a double historicity. Martyn 1979. Cf. Klink for a rebuttal of Martyn. Klink 2007, 107–151.

[40] Barrett notes that the juxtaposition of "god-fearer" (θεοσεβής hapax) and doing God's will blends Jewish and Greek elements. Barrett 1978, 364. Cf. likewise Jn 20:28.

35:13) and also to some Greek thinkers (cf. Philostratus *Vit. Apoll.* I, 12).[41] Similar thoughts are found in other NT texts (Acts 10:2; 1 John 3:21). The effect is here to point to the uniqueness of Jesus and his piety. He can perform a sign (9:16 σημεῖον), the like of which has never been seen. In contrast to the Synoptics, the disciples do not perform any miracles in John. Jesus is the only agent who performs miracles which are understood as 'signs.' In that sense, the scene does not contribute to an understanding of how the disciples are to pray. Indirectly it displays the power at work in the audience. After Jesus has left, he performs miracles *in* and *through* his disciples (Jn 13–17).

The force of the statement is directed at the Pharisees. Irony is used in the claim that God hears only the righteous and in the immediately following statement, "never have we seen such a thing." This seems to make Jesus the only righteous, and sets the Pharisees in a bad light—"God does not hear sinners." Their rejection of the testimony of the healed man is a rejection of Jesus and his miracle which they themselves were unable to perform. In an ironic twist the "blind" Pharisees are presented as not seeing the true bringer of sight. As a group they are pursuing the wrong kind of relation to God. In this they provide a negative contrast to the disciples who will later be in a position to know God truly.

11:22; 41–42 Prayer at the Raising of Lazarus

Chapter 11 and 12 constitute a transitional section between the ministry narrative with its signs and confrontations, and the passion narrative.[42] It completes the number of signs recounted in John at seven. In common Johannine fashion, Jesus is asked to do something and refuses, only to grant the request according to his own timing.[43] Also here misunderstandings and ambiguity are used to construct a second level discourse which reveals Jesus to the audience. He is shown to be the "resurrection

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[41] Cf. further Pulleyn 1998, 12–13, 37, 93. Greek prayer often refers to χάρις, being pleasing to the God in question, and contributing to his or her τιμή.

[42] The historical question of why John uses a raising of the dead not present in the Synoptics, and why he presents it as *the* reason for the Sanhedrin's decision to finally kill Jesus is hard to sort out (11:46–53; 12:10, 18–19). Cf. Mt 11:5.

[43] It is not altogether clear why Jesus is "disturbed" (v. 33 ἐνεβριμήσατο v. 38 ἐμβριμώμενος) and "crying" (v. 35 ἐδάκρυσεν). This is a "human" tone more at home in the Synoptics. In John, Jesus is given less human characteristics (less emotions, no interaction with children, complete control, etc). Jesus already knows the positive outcome of the events. Maybe some symbolical aspect, like 'sorrow over death' is implied. Cf. Lindars 1972, 401.

and life" both by his self-designation (v. 25) and the miraculous act itself. This passage is the clearest example of how the prayer references in this part of the narrative are primarily included to further the Christology, not in order to construct a paradigm to be followed.

Verse 22 is similar to the statement on Jesus' piety found in 9:31. It recounts Martha's perception of Jesus. To her Jesus is a pray-er. More than that, a pray-er in whom she still trusts despite what has happened to her brother. God will still give whatever Jesus "asks" (αἰτέω). This characterisation is stronger than that in chapter 9, as Martha is described as particularly loved by Jesus. This gives her character a high level of credibility within the narrative. However, as the scene progresses her faith is shown lacking. When Jesus reveals himself as the resurrection and life (vv. 25–26) Martha answers with a more messianic confession. When Jesus' revelation is about to be "confirmed" through the resurrection of Lazarus she is horrified at the prospect of opening the grave (vv. 39–40). The statement in v. 22 seems more like an affirmation of eschatological faith despite the present facts.[44] It is faith that *God* will provide eschatological life. The result is to cast doubts on her understanding of Jesus. At the same time the construction suggests the divinity of Jesus to the audience who knows that he is the life (17:3).

The misunderstandings of Martha and other characters are met by Jesus' self-revelation. This self-revelation is developed with the use of a prayer emphasising Jesus' unity with the Father. He states that he does not have to ask the Father to raise Lazarus, since he is one with the will of the Father (4:34; 5:30; 6:38–39).[45] In the Synoptics Jesus prays for God's will to happen, and even struggles with it in Gethsemane. In John the unity with the will of the Father is presupposed (cf. the introduction 1:1–18). Jesus knows the will of the Father without asking (cf. 6:6 and 12:30). At the grave of Lazarus the prayer and miracle is therefore used as a statement on Jesus' union with the Father.[46] The cry "Lazarus, come forth" (v. 43) is more of a direct command which exercises divine power than a prayer to the Father. The result is therefore that Jesus' prayer appears as a revelation of his continuous relationship of unity to the Father (10:30). Here it is

[44] Lindars thinks that "in the circumstances it is virtually a request that he should procure the restoration of Lazarus to life." Lindars 1972, 394. However, this does not give enough weight to her reaction.

[45] Cf. Barrett 1978, 514.

[46] So Moloney 1998, 332–333.

verbalised in order for "those standing around" to receive this revelation (v. 42).[47]

Within the relationship of unity between the Father and the Son there appears to be a place for prayer. Jesus is already assured of Lazarus' resurrection (v. 11), presumably because he has engaged in communication with the Father on the issue prior to the present scene. Jesus has already been heard (ὅτι ἤκουσάς μου v. 41). The gaze to heaven is found also at another prayer-scene in John (17:1).[48] Also, 'Father' is Jesus' customary address in John (12:27–28; ch. 17). The initial praise follows a psalmic pattern (cf. Ps 118:21 cf. also Mt 11:25; Lk 10:21).[49] On this account, the unity of the Father and the Son does not preclude verbal communication.[50] Actually the passage in 5:20 seems to describe a unity in which there is substantial interchange between the Father and the Son ("the Father shows the son . . ."). In that sense the verbal communication is not presented as being solely for the bystanders. It benefitted them, but only as it was a revelation of Jesus' normal communication with his Father.[51]

A number of aspects can be thought to contribute to an ideal in this scene. The address "Father" and the praise of God can be seen as models for Jesus' followers. The unity displayed between Jesus and the Father is not a model in the same manner. The disciples are to receive a proper faith in Jesus and in his unity with the Father. As will be seen, the unity between Jesus and the Father is presented as the basis of the teaching on prayer, especially the call to pray in Jesus' name (14:13; 15:7, 16; 16:23). On this account the narrative of Jesus becomes a revelation of the relationship which his followers are drawn into.

12:27–30 Glorify Your Name

The material in chapter 12 is seen by many as a summary of the Johannine theology, the gist of what Jesus reveals.[52] In yet another scene the divine

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47 Loisy exaggerates in seeing a Jesus "praying for the galleries." Loisy 1921, 353.

48 Cf. Mk 6:41 and parallels. Cf. Schnackenburg 1971, 426.

49 Cf. Wilcox 1977–78, 128–132.

50 "The narrative as a whole, then, suggests that there was an asking and receiving taking place between Jesus and God that did not always need to come to verbal expression, but was nevertheless the backdrop to Jesus' entire ministry." Lincoln 2001, 159.

51 The argument that the prayer was solely for the bystanders "misconstrues the nature of the relationship, which was a living personal interaction." Ridderbos 1997, 405.

52 That is chapter 12 together with 3:16–21, 31–36; 7:33–36; and 8:21–27. So Ashton 1993, 541–545. Cf. also Dodd 1953, 382.

reality of Jesus is portrayed.[53] As regards prayer, the passage treads the same ground as that in the Synoptic Gethsemane prayer, but in Johannine fashion. It is a Johannine comment upon the pending death and resurrection of Jesus.[54] John presents a picture of a Jesus who is returning to his Father. He is fully aware of his destiny in "the hour" (cf. v. 23). This very hour is his exaltation and nothing he can avoid (31–32).[55] In this context the prayer of Jesus in v. 27b should be read as continuing 27a "what should I say" (καὶ τί εἴπω). Prayer for salvation from the hour is shortly brought up only to be rejected. Being saved from "this hour" is not a valid option for him who is one with God's will.[56]

Still, the scene does contain a note of anguish, Jesus' soul *is* troubled (12:27 ἡ ψυχή μου τετάρακται). His death *is* a sacrifice (1:29; 19:31). The language recalls the Lazarus scene and suggests that the problem is the reality of death in his followers, and in his own life. That Jesus' death carries theological weight seems inevitable in the immediately preceding verses. The 'hour' of Jesus' glorification is his death. Jesus is understood as a grain (v. 24) whose being buried leads to life. In this construction, the death is not a goal in itself but leads to the desired "fruitfulness." The cross remains absolutely central to the theology of John (cf. references to the hour in 2:4; 7:30; 8.20; 12:23–26; 13:1, 31; 17:1; and to the ascension of the Son of Man 3:12–15; 6:61–62; 8:28; 12:32).[57]

Verse 28 contains the one explicit prayer from the first part of John "Father, glorify your name." In view of the passion Jesus prays not for himself but for the glorification of the Father. In that sense it is an example of complete obedience. Such complete obedience brings glory to the Father (cf. 7:18; 8:50; 17:1–26).[58] In this context it is significant that the death of Jesus is seen as paradigmatic. Jesus is obedient and his death leads to

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[53] For similarities to the Transfiguration cf. Brown 1966, 476; Bultmann 1971, 327.

[54] In contrast Ashton argues that John does not include "the name of Jesus, the title Messiah, the cross and the passion—even the resurrection" in the "revelatory schema." Ashton 1993, 546. To him John "distils" a theology from the traditional *kerygma*. Ashton 1993, 548.

[55] In Hellenistic Greek ὑψόω is used of "lifted up on a cross," and "exalted to a high office." For a similar *double entendre.* Cf. 3:14; 8:28. Kysar *ABD* 3:917.

[56] Culpepper 1983, 109.

[57] Käsemann, followed by many, saw the passion narrative as "a mere post-script." Käsemann 1968, 7 (*The Testament of Jesus*). For another argument in this vein see Nicholsson 1983. Cf. Bornkamm's persuasive critique of Käsemann in his extensive review of *The Testament of Jesus*. Bornkamm 1986, 79–96. For a convincing presentation of the essential sacrificial character of the death of Jesus in John cf. Turner 1990, 99–122.

[58] "This obedience is the glorification of the Father's name, and constitutes the foundation of the Christian religion (Heb 5:7–10)." Hoskyns 1947, 425. Probably influenced by the opening of John 17, several of the later witnesses read "glorify your Son" (L X fi fi3 33

fruitfulness (v. 27 in light of v. 24). The observation that Jesus' unique death is ultimately what leads to fruitfulness does not undo the pattern of obedience as an example to those who "serve" and "follow" Jesus (v. 26). The argument is similar to that found in the Synoptic prayer-teaching. In John it is placed in the context of the glorification that the Father is to accomplish. This prayer of Jesus is later made the very basis of the prayer-teaching (cf. 14:13).

Again it can be noticed that the interaction between Jesus and the Father is recounted for the benefit of those standing around (v. 30, as in 11:41–42). In John the prayers of Jesus have a revelatory quality. They reveal the relationship he has with the Father. The relationship between Jesus and the Father is one of reciprocity. It is a dialogue in which the two characters engage in verbal interaction. What is more, to John the notion of revelation also implies a personal relationship. There is someone giving and someone receiving revelation. The more explicit teaching on prayer in chapters 13–17 shows that this prayer of Jesus is intended as an example to be followed. Jesus' followers are to use these words. As will be seen, this is what is thought to be accomplished when they remain *in* him, and pray *in* him.

Narrative Progression: Signs Narrative

In the first part of John some of the scenes display Jesus as a pray-er. There is also some material that explicitly discusses piety (4:19–26). Jesus is portrayed as following some Jewish customs of piety, but at the same time he "opposes" the central Jewish institution of the Temple. All in all, 'prayer' as such is not a theme. In this part of the narrative prayer is included to develop the literary character of Jesus; it is referred to as an act done for the sake of those listening (including the audience). This does not mean that the words are intended solely for them. They are rather an explicit revelation of Jesus' relationship to the Father. Jesus can truly reveal the Father, as like knows like. This revelation is later shown to be part of what enables the disciples' worship of the Father in Spirit and in truth. The revelation Jesus brings is his relationship to the Father. In the later part of the narrative this relationship is explicitly shown to include Jesus' followers (especially in 17:1–26). In the first part of the narrative this is hinted at in such passages as 3:16–21 and other places that display Jesus' commission

1071 1241). Neyrey likewise argues for the connection between glory and obedience. Neyrey 2001, 267–291.

by the Father to a specific act on earth, for instance in 8:28–29. In this the prayer teaching of the latter part of the narrative builds on the uniqueness of Jesus' revelation as started in the first part.

Jesus' revelation is not immediately obvious to the other characters of the narrative. An initial positive recognition (up to ch. 4) is turned into an increasingly negative account. Jesus belongs to a different sphere and cannot be known to those of the world (κόσμος). Some have been taken out of the world and have received Jesus' revelation. They now have a new relationship to God (3:3). The text is constructed to speak to those who have accepted this revelation through the extensive use of symbolisms.[59] For the implied audience all scenes of the narrative point to Jesus' hidden identity, and strengthen an insider group.[60]

Passion Narrative 13:1–21:25

In chapter 13 the narrative turns from public scenes to a revelatory speech to the disciples. The farewell speech could be thought to continue directly at the secondary level of symbolical revelation used in the signs narrative. Within the narrative the farewell discourse functions as a comfort for the disciples who are unaware of what lies ahead. At the same time the section also points to the cosmic consequences of that event (17:23–24). In the earlier part of the narrative prayer is used to develop the Christology. Here the prayer material is developed to include the anthropology within the Christology. In these chapters Jesus reveals himself, and in doing so he also reveals his followers' new relationship to God. Jesus' departure is what will secure the benefits described (7:37–39; 13:1, 33, 36; 14:1, 4, 16, 23, 25–26; 15:26–27; 16:7, 12–15). Those benefits are for the insiders, those given to Jesus (17:6). The context and placement within the narrative show that the prayer-teaching is insider information. It is inseparable from what Jesus reveals about himself. Moreover, prayer as described by Jesus is something that can be performed on account of his departure, when he is no longer with them.

In no other place in John is the outline more complex than in chapters 13–17. The forward pointing temporal markers clearly show that the section is to be intended as an explanation of what is about to happen, before it happens (14:29 "I have told you now," or 16:4 "so that you will

[59] Cf. Cullmann 1948, 360–372.
[60] In this sense it is similar to Mark.

remember"). Numerous suggestions have been made to try to sort out the literary organisation of these five chapters.[61] In the following analysis a three part division based on spatio-temporal references will be used (14:31; 16:4). Historical approaches read the text as a compilation that needs to be dismounted to get at an underlying original meaning.[62] In contrast a number of models have been developed that attempt to read the section as a whole.[63] This group of approaches contain a number of chiastic readings. In these readings the vine speech (15:1–17) or a part therein turns out as pivotal.[64] Simoens' argument of a chiasmus structured around love seems particularly strong (cf. 13:1, 15:12–17; 17:26).[65] Brodie uses a progressive model in which the disjunction of 14:31 is to be understood as a move to a higher dimension of spiritual awareness.[66] To him a similar change is also discernible in 17:1, where the audience is turned towards heaven in a second move towards God. This gives three advancing steps of discipleship which are discernible at the theological level of the text. The progress is based on God's initiative (ch.13 cleansing, ch. 15 purifying, and ch. 17 sanctifying), and human response (ch. 14 discerning the divine presence, ch. 15 seeing Jesus, ch. 17 divine human cooperation).[67] This suggestion is attractive to the reading here performed in that it reads the problematic passages as part of the dynamics of the narrative. The reading-experience of the present text is the focus of attention in this monograph.

14:13–14, 16 Teaching I

The first section of the farewell discourse (13:31–14:31) includes two sayings on prayer.[68] These references to prayer are placed in a reflection

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[61] An overview is found in Simoens 1981, 1–51.

[62] Cf. Bultmann's and Bernard's reorganisation of the material. Bultmann 1971, 461, 485–486; Bernard 1928, xvi–xxx. Painter argues that the material has been recycled in new settings. Painter 1993, 417–435.

[63] Some present a naïve reading in which the disciples are thought to rise at 14:31 and be on their way during the later part of the discourse. So Westcott 1954, 187; Haenchen 1984, 128; Carson 1991, 479. Some follow a more critical approach based on literary theory. So Thyen 2005, 582.

[64] Ellis 1984, 14–15, 210–211; Brouwer 2000.

[65] Simoens 1981. So also Moloney 1998, 478.

[66] Brodie 1993, 18–19. In this he uses an 'origenistic' approach to aporia.

[67] Brodie 1993, 430–432. The argument is based among other aspects on John's common use of diptychs and physical movements in theological arguments. Cf. pages 437–440.

[68] Verse 14 repeats v. 13. The omission of this verse in some manuscripts (Alexandrinus, some other Greek mss, some Old Latin mss, and the Sinaitic Syriac) is probably due to a perceived inconsistency with 16:23 and a dislike for repetitions.

which follows Philip's request to be shown the Father (v. 8). To this Jesus answers that he himself is the true revelation of the Father; they are in unity (10:30). The revelation Jesus brings is his relationship with the Father. This revealed relationship sets the stage for the explicit teaching on prayer in John. This is done through the development of Jesus' relationship to his followers which is shown to be included in that between him and the Father (more on this below). The disciples are in unity with Jesus who in turn is in unity with God (6:56; 17:21). This ideal is not one which must be pursued by the pray-er but is one which is accomplished and endowed by Jesus and his Father. The immediate requirement on the follower of Jesus is to receive the revelation of Jesus and be a believer (ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ v. 12), believing in Jesus and his unity with the one God and Father (vv. 10–12).

If the earlier part of the narrative emphasises Jesus' unique role as the Revealer sent from the Father, the farewell speech is more explicit about the place of the disciples in relation to that revelation. In light of the passion Jesus asked that the Father would glorify his name (12:27–30). In Jesus' ministry, death and resurrection the Father is glorified (17:4). When Jesus returns to where he came from the Father will still be glorified, now through Jesus' followers. However, Jesus remains the locus of glorification as the Father is "glorified in the Son" (v. 13) when his followers pray. Jesus remains the active agent working in answer to his followers' prayers to the Father ("Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it.").[69] The greater works to be performed by Jesus' followers are therefore to be understood as Jesus' works. In prayer, the miraculous and God-revealing work (5:36; 10:32–38) of Jesus is continued on earth.[70] To John prayer participates in and furthers the work of Jesus (cf. the Synoptics, for instance Mt 10:1–42).[71] Prayer "in his name" (v. 13) is thereby made a formula of unity between Jesus and his followers.[72]

In the context of Jesus' revelation of his relationship of unity, the reference to the Holy Spirit must be read together with that which precedes it

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[69] It is the Father which is approached in prayer. Prayer to Jesus in Jesus' name does not make sense. The utterance points to Jesus' inclusion in their devotion. The use of Jesus' name is "a feature of the prayer practice promoted and observed in Johannine circles." Hurtado 2003, 391.

[70] Cf. Beasley-Murray 1987, 1. I hold to the option that it is the numerical and geographical dispersion of the revelation of Jesus which is greater.

[71] Lincoln argues about John that prayer "is one of the primary means of cooperation in God's mission in the world." Lincoln 2001, 177.

[72] So Brown 1970, 636.

(vv. 15–18 with vv. 8–11).[73] The Paraclete will be with the disciples forever (v. 16) to remind them of all that Jesus has said (v. 26). The basis of the new relationship between Jesus' followers and God is the revelation given by Jesus. Therefore, being reminded of this is to be seen as an act of salvation. Jesus' prayer for the dispersal of the Paraclete is a gift of salvation (cf. 20:22).[74] That the Paraclete is here seen as the Spirit of Truth (14:17; 16:5–16) is in agreement with 4:23. With this gift, Jesus' followers will be able to worship in Spirit and in truth. In that sense, the new relationship to God can be seen as an interiorisation of the Temple cult (cf. v. 23 "and we will come to him and make our home with him").[75] When the disciples receive the Paraclete they will be in a position to offer true worship; they will actually be better off than when Jesus is with them "in the flesh" (16:7).

In general, the Gospel does not use the conditions for answered prayer found in the Johannine letters (1 Jn 3:21–22; 5:14–15) or the Synoptics (Mt 18:19; 21:22). Certainly, faith should be seen as a general trait necessary in the new relationship to God, but it is not used as a condition for prayer. It is more of a generally presupposed ground on which it is offered. To be a follower of Jesus is to *be* a believer. Either one believes, prays, and does the works (or more precisely lets Jesus do the "works"), or one does not.[76] Positions in between are not spelled out explicitly in John's dualistic outlook. The call to "keep my commandments" should be read in the same context, it is part of what sets the disciples apart from the world (others have already left on account of these words 6:66). The giving of the Holy Spirit further separates the disciples from the world (v. 17) and moves them over into the sphere of Jesus and the Father.

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[73] Note the different word used for the prayer of Jesus and that of his followers. Both v. 14 and v. 15 are protasis-apodosis constructions with "if" (ἐάν) connecting to what precedes it. John's style is quite fluid at this point, with catchwords and associations leading the discourse onwards.

[74] (16:5–16). In 20:22 he gives The Holy Spirit himself, equating him in this respect with God. In the Gospel of John, "the Spirit" is used "to denote the transcendent divine power which enters our world, takes its abode in us and brings about new birth." Cullmann 1995, 96.

[75] So Hoskyns 1947, 460; Ashton 1993, 465. Kerr points to the use of Temple language and themes in the whole chapter. Cf. 1 Kgs 8 where God's name, prayer and glory come together. Even more as the passage focuses on God's presence and his dwelling with the followers of Jesus. Kerr 2002, 268–313.

[76] The all or nothing approach of 1 John is hard to avoid. Jesus is the atonement for the sins of the world (1 Jn 2:1) and at the same time those born from above do not sin (1 Jn 5:18).

Together with the unemotional use of the Gethsemane material in 12:27–28, and the absence of any cry from the cross, John's picture is overwhelmingly positive. The presentation of prayer in these verses is similar to Mk 11:24 and Lk 11:9–10.[77] Jesus promises that he himself will do "whatever" (v. 13 τι ἄν) the disciples pray (13–14). Arguably John presents an idealised form of life in communion with God. Prayer is based on the unity of the Son and the Father, and the Son and his followers. Yet, this ideal picture could be understood to bring the implied audience to repentance. There is also in John a sense of the Synoptic use of the cross and sacrifice of Jesus as an example to be followed (12:23–26). Prayers are to be in line with Jesus' life and character.[78] Yet, this Jesus who is to be followed (1:43–45) is at all times in control of events and exercises his heavenly authority. The absolute contrast to other characters begs the question of how he in any real sense can be followed. It is here that the teaching on unity comes into focus. The last revelatory teaching of Jesus shows how and why this is possible. One aspect of being a follower is to let Jesus work through the act of prayer. It changes the life of his followers in the image provided by his life, death and resurrection. The text thus seems to be more geared towards strengthening and explaining a present praxis than constructing a new one.[79]

The unity with Jesus, through the Paraclete, means that the disciples can also glorify the Father (on the role of the Paraclete cf. 14:25–26; 15:26–27; 16:7–15). This is the main task of Jesus and must therefore be seen as the outcome of his work in them (cf. 12:27–28; 17:4).[80] The result is that, for John, prayer includes the disciples in the inner relationship of the Father and Son. The Johannine pray-er participates in the Son's glorification of the Father. On John's account, the belief and revelation Jesus brings are to be understood on relational terms, they have a giver and a receiver. This is not to suggest that prayer is a matter of ethics, as in right acts towards God. Rather, Jesus' revelation leads to a new relationship to the Father for his followers. Now they can offer true worship, as it is now Jesus who works it in them (with the Paraclete as a "warrant," cf. Eph 1:14). Although

[77] Lincoln 2001, 173.

[78] Culpepper 1998, 211.

[79] This could also explain lack of more practical instruction on how to pray. Such an observation supports the view that the Gospel was written for believers. Cf. 20:31.

[80] The connection between works and glory is known from the OT (1 Chr 16:24; Ps 96:3. cf. Sir 42:17; Prayer of Azariah 1:20).

Jesus departs from the world he will be present in the worship and prayer of his followers.[81]

15:7, 16 Teaching II

The second section of the farewell discourse (15:1–16:4) repeats and expands the themes of the first. This is also the case with a number of the themes used in the prayer-teaching in ch. 14. The language of unity is expanded with the metaphor of Jesus as a vine, with the disciples as branches (15:1–11).[82] The disciples have received the gift of revelation which leads to unity with Jesus and a new relationship to God. The audience have received the gift of the Paraclete who safeguards the revelation and unity. In this context, the metaphor of the vine is introduced to emphasise that this new relationship is due to the disciples' new form of life in Jesus (4:14; cf. 17:3). They have been born from above (3:3), and are now his friends (for prayer and "friendship" cf. 16:27 and 17:10).[83] This new situation with its unity and fruitfulness is due to their "nature"; the vine cannot help but produce fruit.

In the earlier teaching passage (14:13–14 and 16) such general ideals as love of Jesus and unity were used to provide a framework for prayer. In one sense the ideals connected to prayer are quite vague in John; there is, for instance, no explicit teaching on being humble or praying for enemies. It has been argued that John does not have an ethic.[84] This is true in so far as there are no specific set of rules or even a more ethical discourse as that found in the Sermon on the Mount. Yet, John is concerned with how the disciples act.[85] However, as already seen, the ideals of unity and love in the end go back to Jesus. The Johannine ethic is the inclusion of all other relations into Jesus who is at the "centre of all exchanges."[86] It is interesting to note that the mention of "commands" of Jesus appears in the context of prayer (τὰς ἐντολάς 14:15; 15:10). The passage in 15:1–17 contains the only explicit mention of such a command in John, "love each

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[81] So Moloney 1998, 396–397.

[82] Caragounis differs in his argument that Jesus is the vineyard, not the vine. Caragounis 2006, 247–261.

[83] Cf. Abraham God's friend: 2 Chr 20:7; Gen 18:17. Cf. also Sir 6:5–17; Wis 7:27. The ethics of friendship was highly developed in Hellenistic literature. Cf. for instance Plato's *Symp.* 179b–c; 179e–180a; 207a–b; 208d; Aristotle's *Eth. nic* 9:8, 9; Epictetus *Diatr*. 2:7:3; 3:24:64; and his *Ench*. 32:3; Lucian's *Tox.* 6:36. Philostratus *Vit. Apoll*. 7:11–14.

[84] So Wendland 1975, 109; Meeks 1996, 317–319; Theobald 2002, 565.

[85] So Watt 2006, 421–448.

[86] Culpepper 1983, 145.

other as I have loved you" (15:12). As argued above, this saying on love is the highpoint of the chiasm of the farewell speech (15:12–17).[87] In this command the ethics of John are subsumed into the character of Jesus, however, not merely as an example, but as the source of the love they are to display. Jesus now works through them.

The vine image clearly reiterates earlier calls to continue believing, and also to continue praying. It also supports the thought that as regards prayer there is nothing that the disciples must start doing, the call is to continue being a pray-er. Jesus is the active agent in this dynamic. The disciples are called to remain (15:4 μείνατε impv) in the life-giving relationship they now find themselves in. Such language construes their present state as ideal. In that sense John elicits a certain response, but from a different angle than the Synoptics. In the Synoptics, the disciples could be said to progress towards an ideal, whereas John takes an ideal as a starting-point. In John the disciples are strongly exhorted not to deviate from this ideal (15:2, 6). The only true choice is to opt out of the described life-giving unity, a strong response-inviting structure.[88] Not loving is tantamount to not remaining in Jesus (dif. Mt 3:8).[89] If the disciples are not fruitful they are obviously not in agreement with Jesus' revelation. The dualism described in the earlier teaching on prayer is continued here. To pray is to accept Jesus' working in and through the praying self.

Not praying is an act of forsaking the unity Jesus has revealed and accomplished. Chapter 14 presented the disciples with the possibility of being the place where greater works are accomplished. In chapter 15 this picture can be thought to be changed for the metaphor of 'fruit.'[90] The disciples are branches remaining in Jesus, the vine (v. 4), which entails that they bear fruit through him. Bearing fruit is central to the life to which they have been called, as it is the way to bring glory to the Father (v. 8).[91] Yet, exactly what is meant by 'fruit' is hard to ascertain. It should not be read simply as a virtuous life in general terms. Rather, it must be con-

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[87] The persons are constituted by 'love' not by 'being' as such.

[88] Bultmann's emphasis on a basic *Entscheidungsdualismus* is a good reading. Bultmann 1955, 21; Ashton 1993, 397.

[89] "For John love and keeping the commandments are so much a part of the life coming from faith that one who does not behave in a virtuous manner does not have life at all." Brown 1970, 675.

[90] In the OT Israel is called to produce fruits. Is 5:1–7; 27:2. Cf. also Jer 12:10; Ez 15:1–8; 17:5–24; 19:10–14; Ps 80:9–16. The symbol of the vine is widespread in the greater Mediterranean area. Cf. Dodd 1953, 137.

[91] Verse 8 and what follows belongs with the preceding section.

nected to his 'fruitful' death (12:24 and 12:27 on the glorification of God). Jesus brings glory to the Father in his ministry through revealing him (17:4, 6). Prayer enters as a major response to Jesus' revelation in 15:7–8.[92] Producing fruit is possible in answer to prayer (v. 7). In this context, abiding in Jesus appears as a prerequisite, not something the disciples are to accomplish.[93] Prayer remains as the one act which they are to perform.[94] This act leads to their life being patterned on the life of Jesus, including his obedient acceptance of being a seed which dies to give life (12:24–26). The Johannine ethical program is determined by the love manifest in the Father sending the Son to "the hour" (2:4) as a "lamb" (1:29). This love is continued as his followers are obedient to the Father, and give up their lives to reveal him (15:13–15).[95] This is not only a sacrifice but a cause of joy (v. 11 cf. joy at salvation in Jesus 3:29; 4:36; 8:56; 11:15; 14:28), it changes life below into "eternal life" (12:25).

Verse 16c continues with prayer and could be seen as an inclusio with v. 7 (v. 17 being a repetition). It repeats the "ask whatever…" saying of v. 7, now including the name of Jesus. Prayer in Jesus' name is as already argued a reference to the disciples' unity with Jesus. In verse 16 the two subordinated clauses (ἵνα clauses) make the connection between fruit and prayer explicit. Both depend on Jesus' appointment.[96] Jesus has "appointed" (ἔθηκα) the disciples to "go out" (ὑπάγητε), suggesting that the language of fruitfulness is to be read in connection with the extension of the community (cf. 10:16).[97] To John the love between the Father and the Son (3:35; 5:20; 10:17) is extended to the world (v. 12, cf. 3:16) in prayer. To John the prayer of Jesus' followers is therefore seen as part of the relationship between the Father and the Son.[98]

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92 "Das Gebet erscheint als ein zentraler Bestandteil der lebendigen Beziehung der Glaubenden mit Jesus, es ist eingebettet in den Akt des Fruchtbringens." Schnelle 1998, 241.

93 The reference to remaining in Jesus' words should be read as also referring to Jesus, the "Word." So Brown 1970, 662.

94 Compare to Matthew's placement of prayer at the very centre of his ethical discourse, as the source of its accomplishment.

95 Possibly pointing to a background of persecution (cf. 16:1).

96 Barrett 1978, 478.

97 Hoskyns 1947, 478. cf. also vv. 18–27. For mission in John cf. Okure 1988; Köstenberger 1998.

98 In Luke The Holy Spirit speaks in the pray-er to the Father, through or on account of Jesus. See 4.6.2.

16:23–24, 26–27 Teaching III

The third section of the farewell discourse (16:4b–33) picks up themes from the earlier sections and develops them further. 16:16–33 completes the Johannine teaching on prayer. The departure of Jesus will take place in the near future (cf. v. 16 μικρός).[99] The disciples will be sorrowful at this event, but it is actually to their benefit (16:20). Jesus refers to a coming "day" on which they will cease putting questions to him (v. 23). The section (21–24) deals with the difference between before and after.[100] "Questioning" (ἐρωτήσετε v. 23; cf. also 16:30) should be read together with the questions in vv. 17–18 ("what is this that he is saying…").[101] It is not a reference to prayer but a reference to the general ignorance of the disciples as to Jesus' person (αἰτέω is used for the disciples' prayer). After his resurrection they will not need to ask Jesus since the Holy Spirit will guide them into all truth (14:26; 16:13).

16:23b begins a new saying with "amen, amen I tell you."[102] These sayings are a progress beyond the earlier material, now Jesus finally speaks openly (παρρησία vv. 25, 29).[103] "Until now" (ἕως ἄρτι v. 24) the disciples have not had the kind of relationship to God that will come about on account of Jesus' departure (vv. 26–27). Because of Jesus' departure the disciples have direct access to the Father. The disciples will not need any mitigation of God's anger, or any messenger, in their approach of God. The relationship between the Father, Jesus and the disciples is one of love (13:34–35; 14:15–24; 14:31; 15:9–17). This love is the basis of the new form of prayer, the Father "himself" will love them (v. 27 αὐτὸς γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ φιλεῖ ὑμᾶς). Jesus will not need to pray for them, they will pray in his name directly to the Father (v. 26).[104] As suggested earlier this use of Jesus' name designates the unity between him and his disciples (14:13–17). When they pray, he is the one working. There is at the same time a reference to a future coming

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[99] The reference has also been understood as denoting Jesus' ascension to the Father and the return at the *parousia*, the ultimate act of God. Barrett 1978, 491. cf. 14:3. For this meaning cf. Mt 7:22; Lk 10:12 and 2 Tim 1:12, 18.

[100] Moloney 1998, 448.

[101] So Brown 1970, 722.

[102] So Barrett 1978, 494.

[103] This supports a progressive interpretation of the outline of the farewell speech.

[104] The majority of manuscripts place "in my name" with "ask anything of the Father," some reads it with "he will give" (P^{5vid} B C* and Origen). The minority group has some weight, and could be said to be the more difficult reading. The latter option is attractive in that it bases the answer in Jesus' relationship with the Father. Yet, this thought is not excluded by asking "in his name," rather the opposite.

of Jesus which will end all present afflictions (v. 21).[105] Prayer is a proleptic share in that reality.

In v. 24 the joy, mentioned in connection with prayer in 15:11, comes more into focus. The world will rejoice and be glad at the event that is about to take place (v. 20). The disciples on the other hand will grieve/have pain (v. 20 λυπηθήσεσθε). Yet, this reality will be reversed, and the disciples will be joyful at the event at hand. The joy stemming from this event will be completed/fulfilled (v. 24 πεπληρωμένη) in their prayers and the answers they will receive.[106] Already in 3:29 John bore witness that the coming of Jesus was a cause of fulfilled joy. The joy fulfilled at Jesus' coming is continued in the prayers of his followers. It is not set up as a condition but as a natural result of the prayers.

17:1–26 Jesus' Final Prayer

The prayer in chapter 17 concludes the farewell discourse and contains elements from the whole of John (for instance "eternal life" 4:14 etc, and "Jesus Christ" 1:17).[107] It is the highpoint of what Jesus reveals; his relationship to the Father. The genre of the prayer is not clear-cut, as the form and context are not easily comparable to other texts.[108] The general themes used in the context of prayer in the Synoptic Gospels also show up here, though with a Johannine bent.[109] The language is somewhat similar to Mt 11:25–27//Lk 10:21–22, but on the whole the tone is very different from that used in the Synoptics. The prayer is very different from the Gethsemane prayer which occupies the same place within the narrative in the Synoptics.[110] In John the passage is presented as the last prayer of Jesus. At the same time it contains important teaching elements (for instance

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[105] As argues Moloney 448–451. The disciples must pray in the "in-between-time." Moloney 1998, 451.

[106] The joy "will be fulfilled only in that intimate fellowship with the Father (1 John 1:4) which is to be effected by the death and resurrection of Jesus." Hoskyns 1947, 488.

[107] For a polemical presentation of historical issues cf. Käsemann 1968. He sees the prayer as wholly docetic (cf. p. 65). For convincing counter-arguments cf. Ashton 1993, 72; Hill 2004.

[108] Cf. testamentary last prayers in Gen 49; Lev 17:11–17; Deut 32–33. Cf. also *C.H.* 1. Poimandres 31–32.

[109] Some see the prayer as the "Our Father" in a different idiom. So Schenk 1992; Walker 1982. I agree with Barrett that "there are parallels with the Lord's Prayer but these are by no means extensive enough to cover the prayer as a whole." Barrett 1978, 501. A number of scholars find in this prayer the major themes from Jesus' teaching and practice of prayer in the Synoptics. Cf. for instance Bockmuehl 1994, 138.

[110] John emphasises obedience over distress. Barrett 1978, 500.

17:3).[111] Actually, the text has sometimes been thought to contain within it the sum of Johannine theology.[112] Here the passage will be discussed mainly in regards to the theological themes that pertain directly to the present investigation of prayer.

The outline of the prayer has been much discussed. Here a four-part division based on semantic aspects will be used (1–5, 6–19, 20–24, 25–26).[113] The prayer contains seven petitions and material that explains and substantiates these. The first two petitions concern Jesus and his glory, and are the basis of those that follow. The third through seventh petitions are prayers for the protection, sanctification, and unity of the disciples and their followers (vv. 11, 15, 17, 21, 24). In addition to the formal outline one could speak of a pivot in v. 19. In that verse Jesus sanctifies himself, *and* the disciples. Here Jesus explicitly includes the disciples in his ministry (v. 18), a highpoint in his revelation.

The first section of the prayer contains the two petitions in which Jesus refers to himself (vv. 1–5). These petitions are also the basis of Jesus' prayers for the disciples. Jesus asks that God should "glorify" him (vv. 1, 5). This language picks up the introduction of the farewell speech which is equally concerned with glory (13:31–32). The petition for the glorification of God is Jesus' central prayer in the early section of the narrative (12:27–28), and the goal of the prayer he has taught his disciples (chs. 13–16). Here a further step is taken in the mention of Jesus' pre-existent glory (vv. 5, 24), evident in the introduction (1:1–18). The mutual act of glorification is basic to the relationship between Jesus and his Father. Jesus is here depicted as a divine agent, praying before he is exalted to heaven above. He is presented as absolutely sure of the outcome of the events that lie before him (v. 1 "the hour *has come* . . ." etc).[114] The role of a heavenly intercessor is one which other voices in the NT picked up and emphasised (cf. Lk 22:31–32; 1 Jn 2:1; Heb 7:25; 9:14; Rom 8:34).[115]

In the following petitions Jesus prays for the disciples in a way that integrates them into his relation to the Father. Verses 6–19 speak of the

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[111] In the early church the prayer was often seen as teaching. Agourides 1968, 137–143.

[112] To Schnackenburg verses 6–10 contain the whole Johannine theology of revelation and the community of salvation. Schnackenburg 1975, 174–175. "This chapter is a summary of the Johannine discourses and in this respect is a counterpart to the prologue." Käsemann 1968, 3. "The prayer of John 17 summarizes what the Johannine Jesus stands for and shows what it means to pray in Jesus' name." Lincoln 2001, 172.

[113] Following Barrett 1978, 499.

[114] Tolmie 1995, 221.

[115] Cf. Bockmuehl 1994, 140.

disciples in relation to Jesus and the Father. This section includes three petitions (vv. 11, 15, 17). Jesus now completes his work (v. 4) of revelation to those given him by the Father (v. 6). They are taken out of the world and belong to God. As already shown in the farewell discourse the disciples are included in the work of Jesus and the Father. In the prayer they are described as the Father's gift for Jesus (v. 6).[116] The disciples' relation to Jesus and the Father is not only a matter of sharing in their work, but of sharing in their inner relationship.[117] John construes the disciples' existence as part of the relationship of unity and love between the Father and the Son.[118] It is in this light that the reference to not praying for the world (v. 9) should be understood. The prayer is one in which the unity between the agents involved is presupposed and maintained (cf. v. 8 referring to those who have faith). Moreover, the inner relationship and unity between Father and Son is the basis of the disciples' new existence.

Verse 11b contains the first petition for the disciples. At his departure Jesus asks that his disciples will be protected, "so that they may be one, as we are one." Here the relationship between Jesus and the Father is presented as the ideal model of that among the community of disciples. Verse 15 continues with a petition for protection against the evil one (cf. Lk 22:32). Evil is a present reality for the follower of Jesus. Verse 17 prays for the disciples' sanctification in the truth which is the word (λόγος), which in John is Jesus himself (cf. 14:6 "I am the truth . . ."). Along the same lines Jesus prays for his own sanctification which ensures their sanctification.[119] Up to verse 19 Jesus emphasises that he is now about to perform his last 'sign' which will enable the disciples' new relationship to God. He has kept and protected them (v. 12 ἐτήρουν and ἐφύλαξα), and asked that they also will be kept after his departure (v. 15 τηρήσῃς aor. subj. 2.p.sg. τηρέω).

A second group of petitions dealing with "those who will be brought to faith through the disciples' word" is found in the passage from vv. 20–24. Whereas the disciples in the earlier section (1:19–12:50) could be seen as examples for the audience, this prayer explicitly draws the later into view.

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[116] The inclusion of 'love' means that the unity in question is not a form of monism, but an interaction involving irreducible persons.

[117] Lincoln 2001, 165.

[118] "Unlike the Synoptic Gospels, the Fourth Gospel presents Jesus' prayer life not primarily as an example to imitate, but as indicative of the Son's mystical union with the Father, in which believers come to *participate*." Bockmuehl 1994, 139.

[119] This verse is the reason for the common designation of 'high priestly prayer.'

Here the language of unity is taken a step further. Jesus asks that they would be one. More than that, he asks that they would be *in* him and the Father. They are indeed to be "perfectly one" (v. 23 ἵνα ὦσιν τετελειωμένοι εἰς ἕν). Not only that, and this could be seen as the very highpoint, they are to see Jesus' glory (v. 24). Jesus has in fact given them of his glory which he received from the Father (17:22). No distinction seems to be made between the glory which Jesus gives and that which they are to see. Jesus gives something which is his own to the disciples (cf. Mk 9:4). The main prayer of Jesus in the signs narrative is, "Father, glorify your name"; and this is the result of his "work" (17:4 τὸ ἔργον cf. 13:31–32). The Father glorifies Jesus (17:1, 5). The disciples' prayer will bring glory to the Father (15:1–17). The net result is that it is the Father who is the active agent in bringing about the glorification of his own name. Jesus' prayer shows his active role in this process. The audience glorifies the Father as Jesus works through them in prayer.[120] When Jesus prays for his own glorification, he equally prays for his disciples. The world is also included in this since the fruits which the disciples are to bear is the extension of Jesus' revelation to them. When they are one with Jesus and the Father, the world will see God's love (v. 23). The last section of the prayer does not contain any further petitions but recapitulates the prayer in the statement that Jesus has revealed and will reveal God's name so that God's love for Jesus will be manifest in the disciples (v. 26).

The prayer functions as a revelation of Jesus given before the cross and resurrection, confirming his identity in light of what is to transpire.[121] It reveals Jesus' task and his relation to the Father and is therefore mainly a Christological revelation (as in 11:42).[122] It is not the same form of paradigmatic ideal as the Our Father. At the same time it is an example of the love which governs the disciples' new relationship to God (16:27).[123] A certain intimacy is appropriate also for them when they pray (16:26–27).[124] The love between Jesus and the Father is extended to the disciples when the Father gives his Son as a gift (3:16, cf. 1:29, 36). To the world this gift is

[120] Jesus is sent (3:16, 34; 5:37–38; 6:29; 7:33; 12:44; 13:20; 15:21; 16:5; 17:3) and sends his disciples (4:38; 17:18; 20:21).

[121] Note that Jesus does not mention the Spirit, but focuses on glory and love. The Spirit is to remind of Jesus' teaching (14:26). Jesus' end is to bring glory to the Father.

[122] It is the gift of "overhearing the Godhead." Stibbe 1994, 178. Cf. Dodd 1953, 417–419. It is a revelation to the insiders who "can hear it and understand it." Käsemann 1968, 6.

[123] "Salvation is the fruit of the whole incarnate life of Jesus Christ." Barrett 1978, 80.

[124] Cf. though the already mentioned distinction between ἐρωτάω and αἰτέω.

extended in a one-sided relationship, not necessarily received (17:9). The outcome of the new relationship of unity for prayer is that the disciples are always included when Jesus now prays to the Father. They are one with him and he works through them when they pray. At this stage of the narrative Jesus speaks openly (παρρησία 16:29). The prayer is an example of such speech.[125] It reveals the relationship into which they have been included.[126] For the disciples prayer is a way in which they remain within the dynamics of this relationship. Prayer as such is always based in the work of Jesus and results in works of Jesus (15:5). The disciples are not to pray for their own glorification (like Jesus in vv. 1, 5) or to sanctify themselves (v. 19). Rather Jesus' prayer is prior and their joining in is dependent on his relationship to God and the work he accomplishes. He sanctifies himself, "so that they may be sanctified in truth" (v. 19). Read together with the agrarian language of 12:24 and 15:1–17 the result seems to be that the disciples should pray for their continued task of furthering Jesus' revelation to the world.

The prayer also functions as a stylised compression of the Gospel narrative. This is the case both with the chronological presentation of Jesus, and the relationship between the characters. Jesus speaks in the world (13) referring to what he has done, and of his return to the Father (vv. 5, 11, 13).[127] In one sense he is already in heaven (v. 24). At the same time the prayer also goes outside the frames of the narrative in the reference to pre-history (v. 5) and the eschatological future (v. 26). Within the prayer five agents or groups can be distinguished: The Father, Jesus, those given to Jesus, those who will come to faith, and a group apart from the others—"the world."[128] One effect of this characterisation is to rend the possibility of not remaining in Jesus, becoming like the world, null and void.[129] To be a pray-er is to have a task vis-à-vis them. The world's only hope is to cease being the world.[130] The Father is an active agent throughout the narrative

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125 "Having been told about their need to pray in Jesus' name, they are then given a model for such prayer in Jesus' own prayer that follows." Lincoln 2001, 176.

126 "Believers in Jesus are part of the unique prayer experience between Christ and God, and so are caught up in his intercessory praying and share in it themselves when they pray in Jesus' name." Lincoln 2001, 171.

127 "The distinction between past and present in these passages is clear-cut enough to make its ever being doubted astonishing." Hägerland 2003, 319.

128 For a presentation of the characters of the prayer cf. Diehl 2007, 84–110.

129 In the prayer, "the world" is used for all opposition to Jesus (13:2, 26, 27; 14:30). Cf. Brodie 1993, 433.

130 Klink 2007, 236.

(4:23; 5:17, 21, 36–37; 6:32, 37, 44; 8:18, 28, 54; 10:15, 36).[131] This is also the case with prayer which he works and receives at the same time. The narrative is developed in revealing Jesus' relation to God his Father. The other characters are secondarily introduced to enable the presentation of a right response to God, through the character of Jesus.[132] The disciples are positively portrayed in the prayer as opposed to the more ambiguous picture in the rest of the farewell discourse. This is appropriate as the outlook is now that of Jesus and his accomplishments.

The ideal pray-er constructed here can be recapitulated in a few sentences. The disciples' prayers are based on the new relationship to God achieved by Jesus, and consists in unity with him and the Father.[133] They are a part of the inner relationship between Jesus and the Father. In prayer the disciples speak out of their unity with Jesus and the Father, and at the same time pursue it. A main petition must be that for the furthering of Jesus' revelation to the world, which will bring glory to the Father. The widely used address 'Father' is also to be used by them (vv. 1, 5, 11, 21, 24, and 25. cf. 20:17 "your Father"). This ideal is not ethical or focused on what the audience should do, but on the Christology. The ideal in prayer is constructed as a natural consequence of the Christology. It is Jesus who works through their prayer, and in the end it is God who glorifies himself in it. Prayer is a willing participation in that dynamic. A specific tool that could be singled out in this construction is the use of analogical relations. The relationship between Jesus and God is presented as a type of their inner relationship and their relationship to Jesus and the Father.[134] This is evident in the use of "as/just as/even as" (καθώς).[135] The disciples are one *as* the Father and Jesus are (vv. 11, 21, 22), God loved the disciples *as* he loved Jesus (v. 23), they do not belong to the world and *neither* does Jesus (14, 16). Thus the relationship between Jesus and the Father is used to explain

[131] Some argue that there is progression in the shift from "Holy Father" (v. 11) to "Righteous father" (v. 25). So Hoskyns 1947, 506–507. The fact remains that the focus is on Fatherhood and not legal matters. So Stibbe 2006, 192. The use of "Holy Father" might reveal a liturgical setting. cf. *Didache* 10:2.

[132] "Even in self-revelation the Father's 'otherness' is not compromised." Stibbe 2006, 186.

[133] "From the foot-washing and the picture of the beloved (in chap. 13) to the final prayer for unity, it is precisely union which is the guiding purpose of chaps 13–17." Brodie 1993, 440.

[134] "The effect of the revelation in Jesus, therefore, is to enable others to share in his relationship to the Father." Culpepper 1983, 114–115.

[135] "The mark of Jesus' followers is that they live 'just as' Jesus lived (see the use of 'just as' [*kathos*] in 13:15, 34; 15:10, 12; 17:18; 20:21; 1 John 2:6, 27; 3:3, 7)." Culpepper 1998, 100.

that between the disciples and the Father. The former is a dynamic relationship, and the relationship between the disciples and God should also be seen as such.[136] It is the unity of the disciples with Jesus which is presented as enabling their inclusion in the relationship between the Son and the Father. The language is therefore not directly analogical but indirectly so, through their participation in Jesus.

19:30 Last Words of Jesus

The Johannine last words of Jesus are not a prayer. In John, Jesus does not pray from the cross at all. In contrast to the Synoptics, Mark especially, the focus is on Jesus' achievement and not on his forsakenness. His utterance is a fitting conclusion of the narrative as a whole. Jesus remains in control and to the very end he remains the active character.[137] He has no need of asking for reassurance (19:28 "Knowing that all was accomplished he said . . ."). He is portrayed as giving a declaration, "it is accomplished," after which he gives up (παρέδωκεν) his spirit willingly (cf. 10:18).

Prayer to Jesus?

In John there is no use of ambiguous requests to Jesus that could be read as prayers by an initiated audience. There are some addresses of Jesus as Lord (κύριε) in connection with healings, but they are embedded in the narrative (4:49; 5:7). That is, they do not quote psalms, and are best read as hortatory addresses. The miracle stories are introduced with narrative descriptions of the scenes (2:3), often with Jesus taking the initiative as healer (5:6; 9:1–12; 11:1–44). There is one psalmic address in 12:13, but it is a stylised praise of the Messiah who enters Jerusalem—not a petition (Hosanna, blessed is the one . . .). There is what amounts to a prayer to Jesus in Rev 22:20, but that is the closest one gets to a narrative description of a prayer to Jesus in the Johannine literature ("Come Lord Jesus"). Then there is the statement in 14:14 "whatever you ask *me*, in my name, I will do" (ἐάν τι αἰτήσητέ με . . .). Here it is obvious that the disciples are called to ask/petition Jesus and that he will answer, acting in the same manner as God (the verb αἰτέω is consistently used for the disciples address of

[136] "Das aber heißt für sie—und für die das Evangelium Lesenden und Hörenden—, sich als Gott beanspruchte zu verstehen und sich auch wirklich in Anspruch nehmen zu lassen." Wengst 2001, 186. Cf. God's claim on Israel as his holy people (Ex 19:6; Lev 11:44–45; 19:2).

[137] Schnackenburg 1975, 332.

God). The verse appears as a clarification of the previous verse which only mentions prayer in Jesus' name. 14:16 continues with a description of Jesus role as heavenly intercessor.

The teaching on Jesus' name is then qualified by the passages in 16:23–24, 26:27. In these verses Jesus speaks of a time when the disciples will address the Father directly, still "in his name." Yet, now Jesus states that "I do not say that I will petition/ask the Father for you/on your account" (note the distinction between the verbs used for Jesus ἐρωτάω and the disciples αἰτέω in this verse). There appears to be a progression as the passage deals with that which is *now* available, this will happen on "that day" (v. 26). The whole section speaks of what is happening "now" (16:29, 31; 17:1). Finally, Jesus comes to a point where the disciples recognise that he speaks "openly" (παρρησία). In light of Jesus' revelation, including the following acts of salvation, the disciples now find themselves in a position which means that they can approach God directly. This will occur with the indwelling of the Paraclete (16:5–15).[138] In that sense John does not include prayer to Jesus. Yet, within the circle of unity, it appears as if it is appropriate to level petitions also to Jesus. Jesus only does that which the Father shows him, and glorifies him. In that sense, prayers to Jesus seems to be indirectly acknowledged. The meaning of the statement in 16:26 is rather that Jesus will not need to mediate as intercessor before the Father, who loves the disciples (cf. though 1 Jn 2:1). When they pray in Jesus' name they already pray from a position in unity with Jesus.[139] Until now they have not prayed in this unity (v. 24 "until now you have not prayed in my name"). On this account Jesus prays for his followers, and above all *with* and *through* them (17:21).

Narrative Progression: Passion Narrative

The Johannine prayer teaching is concentrated to the farewell discourse, indicating the importance of prayer after Jesus' departure. When he was with them he kept them (17:12), now they must pray themselves in order to remain in him (15:1–10). This is inside information which continues directly on the level of symbolical communication used in the earlier narrative section. In the early parts of the narrative this level was communi-

[138] So Brown 1970, 733.

[139] On the prayer in Jesus name in the verse Schnackenburg observes: "dass heist in Anbetracht dessen, dass sie zu Jesus gehören, oden in Kontext wohl sogar 'an Jesu Statt.' " Schnackenburg 1975, 180.

cated through misunderstandings and irony. The events were symbolical of a higher level of discourse. In the farewell speech (13–17) this discourse is continued at the surface level, with a direct address of the disciples and audience at the same time. The few expressed misunderstandings of the disciples only guide the discourse along.

The prayers of the disciples and the audience are based on the unity with Jesus and the Father. The ideal is therefore properly theological, and as a part of that Christological. The audience is to remain in the position they already hold on account of Jesus' work. It is placed *in* him in a "realised" eschatology. The result is that prayer as such is not a theme in John. The focus is not on what should be done or said but on what God does.[140] Certainly, this work of God also includes prayer. God works to glorify himself through Jesus and also through the disciples and their prayer. When they pray in Jesus' name they participate in the inner relationship between Jesus and God, and actively pursue their own unity with them.

There is a paradox in the characterisation of Jesus. He is both a much more elevated figure than in the Synoptics, and at the same time much more united with the disciples. In Luke, for instance, Jesus is used as a direct example for the disciples, they are to imitate him. In John the picture is more complicated. Only Jesus can reveal himself and the Father. At the same time Jesus works through the disciples. They can reveal Jesus, but then it is Jesus who reveals himself in them. They cannot repeat his prayer which he utters as one in unity with God, yet the disciples are "completely" one with them. The result is that Jesus exemplifies their new relationship to the Father. He is not an ethical example, but the place of their relation to God. The disciples can approach God as Jesus does, in his name. The theme of prayer is thus wholly integrated with the rest of John in one theological whole.

Conclusion

Construction of the Ideal Pray-er

Displaying the construction of an ideal is not easy in John where the theology and form are of one cloth. The construction and description of ideals are not easily separated. John moves effortlessly from description of

[140] In John there is "no teaching specifically on prayer." Bockmuehl 1994, 136.

characters and their acts into theological discourses.[141] In this way John's development of ideals is different from that of the Synoptics. Often John can be thought to communicate explicitly at two levels at the same time. The first level is the narrative which provides the base, and the second consists of a symbolical or 'spiritual' level which runs parallel to it.[142] Likewise, the language of the Gospel makes not great distinction between that of the narrator and that of Jesus. This means that the tools used by John in presenting an ideal are bound to be interdependent. In what follows I will discuss the strategies used in John according to the outline described in the introduction.

John does not present the teaching of Jesus in the same manner as in the more paraenetic discourses of the Synoptics (as in Mt 5:1–7:29 or Lk 6:17–49). Still, also in John is Jesus portrayed as instructing his disciples on prayer (point a: teaching by Jesus). The only direct instruction on prayer is that found in the farewell discourse (chs 13–16), the section of the Gospels which is most like teaching. Of special note in the Johannine picture of prayer are the non-cultic and "non-religious" terms used to describe it.[143] Throughout a simple "ask" is used (ἐρωτάω and αἰτέω).[144] John's particular use of language indicates the perceived newness of the message.[145] The language used to describe Jesus' unique relationship to God is exemplified by the use of "Father" (πατήρ). The same can be said of the simple "I wish/desire" used in the prayer of ch. 17 (17:24 θέλω in "contrast" to "thy will be done" in the Synoptics cf. Mk 14:36). Jesus has a special relation to God. The disciples are not portrayed as praying in John, yet they are called to address God as "Father" (16:24–27). They are to "ask" (αἰτέω) in Jesus' name.

John also relates the audience to the character of Jesus in the passages on prayer (point b: paradigmatic and unique aspects of the character of Jesus). The Synoptic distinction between Jesus as a unique character and as a paradigmatic ideal is not immediately applicable in John. In John

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[141] Cf. For instance 1:15 which moves on to 1:16–18, or 3:10 on to vv. 15–21.

[142] The "network of imageries, not related on imagery level (seed and sheep represent different imageries), but on thematic level (service, death, etc.)" mean that the imagery is secondary to the message. Watt 2006, 444.

[143] There is no use of προσεύχομαι, as for instance in Mt 6:9. This is maybe due to a need to differentiate the community from a Jewish surrounding were such terms where often used in prayer-settings. For examples and discussion cf. Ostmeyer 2006, 342.

[144] Ostmeyer 2006, 329, 345. Cf. also Hamman 1959, 387.

[145] So Ostmeyer 2006, 336.

Jesus is wholly other, descended from God's realm. This does not mean that Jesus is not relevant for the pray-er; to the contrary. However, the character of Jesus is used in a different way in John. Jesus is the one Revealer of God, whom he reveals through laying bare their reciprocal relationship.[146] One of the main functions of the prayer-texts is to develop the picture of Jesus' intimate relationship with God. Moreover, Jesus is shown to pray for the disciples as a unique Intercessor. In this role he is shown to include the disciples in his relationship with the Father. He prays for the dispersal of the Holy Spirit (14:16), and for the disciples' unification with him and the Father (ch. 17). After his departure the disciples can participate in his relation to the Father and worship in Spirit and in Truth. The Father and Jesus are one, and Jesus is united with the disciples (17:21–23). In this context the ideal pray-er is constructed as a function of the Christology.[147] As John's picture of Jesus is unique, so is the picture of the pray-er.[148] Jesus' divinity and otherness are hinted at throughout the Gospel and devotion is properly directed to him (cf. especially Jn 20:28). Yet, and this is one of the great paradoxes of John, the distance between the audience and Jesus is overcome. Not in the sense of being collapsed, but in so far as the disciples now participate in Jesus and his relationship with the Father. This is the end result of Jesus' revelation of his relation to the Father—the disciples' inclusion in it.

In John, the prayer in Jesus' name is a form of shorthand used to refer to Jesus' unity with the pray-er (cf. exegesis of 14:13–14, 26; 15:16; 16:23–26). The invocation of Jesus' name amounts to an association with Jesus and recognition of his work of salvation. When the pray-er asks in Jesus' name, he or she asks from the unity with Jesus. In this way Jesus is directly connected to the piety of his followers. When they pray it is actually Jesus who works in and through them. As the Father is one with him, it must be concluded that it is the Father who works in and through them. Yet, this is not to be thought of as the inclusion of God in an autonomous individual pray-er. Rather, the pray-er is caught up into the prior relationship of Jesus and the Father.[149] To be a pray-er is to be in Jesus.

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[146] Revelation is here a relational category, with a giver and receiver of that revelation implied.

[147] John's "spirituality" is Christocentric. Barton 1992, 118f.

[148] "The strangeness of Jesus' prayers in John's Gospel is related to the Evangelist's distinctive portrayal of Jesus' divine identity." Lincoln 2001, 159. Jesus is all-knowing like the implied author. So Culpepper 1983, 36.

[149] The Father-Son relationship determines the ethics. Watt 2006, 448.

John uses a wide range of OT material (point c: ideals from the Old Testament). Just as with the material attributed to Jesus the OT passages and themes are integrated into the theology and language of John, also into the theme of prayer. In one instance psalmic language is used when other characters address Jesus, as in the Synoptics (Jn 12:13). Yet, this is not a dominant trait. The OT quotes used throughout emphasise the fulfilment of promises (with appropriate formulas "it is written," "this was to fulfil"). To a certain extent John could be thought to pursue a typological interpretation of the OT. Yet, this is not used extensively in the material on prayer. However, there is one OT image that can be thought to be central to prayer in John—the Temple. Jesus is the new Temple, as God is present in him (2:18–22). Jesus comes to take the place of the Temple as the locus of God's presence. Yet the imagery goes beyond a simple scheme of: 'prayer in the Temple is now prayer in Jesus'. The language of unity is more relational and reciprocal.

John develops a discourse which communicates to a group of insiders (point d: play on pre-knowledge). They are those born from above, who have received the revelation of Jesus (1:12; 3:3). The implied audience understands the revelatory language used throughout John. Symbols and images are used to describe the relationship to Jesus and God.[150] The farewell discourse, and in it the teaching on prayer, continue directly at this second level of discourse, speaking directly to the audience. In this context prayer as Jesus teaches and enables is "true worship" (4:19–26; 14–17). Actually the final prayer of Jesus can be regarded as an extended symbol of the relationship the audience has to him and to God. For the audience the misunderstandings of the disciples and the tension of the text are aids in their participation in the symbolical level of the narrative. It is so constructed as to demand active input and existential involvement.[151] In the sense of eliciting a certain response and "creating" a certain experience the text in itself is the means of participation in the revelation

[150] In this it bridges the divine and human sphere. Koester 1995, 28. Cf. discussions on Johannine "mysticism" in Meeks 1972, 44–72; Kanagaraj 1998, 186–213. Others designate the same aspects "apocalypticism." Cf. Painter 1993, 134, 160; Ashton 1993, 404–405, 434; De la Potterie 1997, 67. Overall this "mysticism" is Christocentric, not impersonal (17:1, 45, 10, 22–23). Cf. Schnackenburg 1975, 41. Some see the "mystical elements" as a Hellenistic influence. So Schweitzer 1931; Dodd 1953. Others see a Jewish influence. So Odeberg 1929; Dahl 1962, 124–142; Borgen 1965, 2, 147, 177; Meeks 1967; Kanagaraj 1998. I follow the latter option.

[151] On a theological level, the "tension can be seen as an outworking of the dialogical character of revelation." Anderson 1996, 260.

presented.[152] The tension, or even dualism, of John enables the text to impact the reader through bringing about a "crisis."[153] Providing the required input is only possible on personal terms. The claims of the narrative include the audience in it. It is this process that creates an insider group, those who understand the true meaning of the revelation (in Johannine interpretation often dubbed 'irony').[154]

John frames his story in the same narrative framework as the other canonical Gospels (point e: narrative progression). This is certainly the case with the progression towards the cross and resurrection. However, the Gospel is not based on the progression of the narrative to the same extent as Mark or Luke. The progress is more along lines of thematic development than a strict narrative plot.[155] The thematic integration means that the end and meaning of the narrative can be found in each individual scene.[156] In that sense the scenes of the narrative are interpretive of the whole to a greater extent than in the Synoptics.

John also employs the strategy of characterisation in the construction of an ideal pray-er (point f: characterisation). However, in concord with the previous paragraph on narrative progression it can be observed that there is no significant development of the characters within the narrative (as in Lk). They constitute a continuum of faith responses.[157] The result is that the narrative is a string of illustrative scenes that confront the audience with choices over following Jesus.[158] Yet, that which is to be responded to is the revelation developed "above" the narrative as such. In general terms the result is a higher level of abstraction than in the Synoptics. For an example see the way in which Temple metaphors and symbols are integreated into the theology (2:19 and throughout).[159] However, the Temple is not explicitly used in the prayer-material—as it is in the Synoptics. The greater abstraction of John's thought seems to result in a different approach. John discusses 'glory' and 'presence' but in a way

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[152] O'Day 1986, 104. The text is revelation.

[153] So Anderson 1996, 262–264. Displacement or distortion create meaning in poetry. Riffaterre 1978. On the function of paradoxes in John cf. Barrett 1972; Barrett 1982, 98–115; Duke 1985, 155; Stibbe 1991; Brodie 1993. On ambiguous or double terms cf. Cullmann 1948, 360–372.

[154] Cf. Culpepper 1983, 179; O'Day 1986, 31, 43–46.

[155] Culpepper 1983, 234.

[156] Culpepper 1983, 97.

[157] So Loisy 1921, 127–128; Collins 1976, 31; Culpepper 1983, 98, 104, 145–147; Moloney 1997, 221; Klink 2007, 199.

[158] Cf. Brown 1970, 185; Lindars 1972, 53–54; Staley 1988, 106.

[159] Cf. Davies 1974, 288–335; Coloe 2001.

that implants these aspects in a new Christological setting. The heavenly reality of God and his pre-existent son is more important than all else. The characterisation is used to provide a running comment on the secondary level of the narrative, more so than in the Synoptics. The result is that the implied audience is involved in a continous process of change.

When it comes to eschatology, John has another emphasis than the Synoptics (point e: eschatology). Certainly, there are also in John elements of salvation which await completion (future resurrection 5:28–29; 6:39, 40, 44, 54; judgment 3:16, 36; 12:48; *Parousia* 14:3; 21:21–23).[160] Trouble and conflict still exist, and ultimate judgment is pending (5:25–29; 6:39–44; 11:24; 12:48). This basic situation, which represents a foundation for prayer in the Synoptics, is also found in John (16:33).[161] John shares the already-not-yet eschatology of the Synoptics.[162] Prayer is precisely a marker of such a basic outlook.[163] In John, prayer is to be spoken after Jesus returns to the Father and leaves the disciples behind. The incompleteness of their present experience seeks completion in prayer. At the same time the pray-er is one with Jesus at the time of praying.[164] Prayers are spoken from the vantage-point of Jesus' acts of salvation. The pray-er is challenged to remain in that reality through prayer (cf. Lk 21:36 "watch at all times"). However, the act of prayer also harbours the possibility of disunity. It is only prayer which maintains the unity revealed. Not to pray is a disestablishment of the unity achieved by Jesus.

The characterisation and description of the "life from above" can be thought to have gone through an eschatological idealisation in John. John pushes in the direction of presenting two basic options, either for or against Jesus. This division is often seen as part of a greater dualism.[165] Those who drink will not thirst, those who eat will not hunger, and those who receive the light will not walk in darkness (4:14; 6:35; 8:12). Or take the extreme characterisation of 8:43–48, 52. One is either in darkness or fully enlightened. It is likewise with prayer. A human being is either a

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[160] In John we find an interweaving of present and future utterances. So Frey 1997, 418–429, 465–470.

[161] Painter argues that in John the conflict with "darkness remains unresolved." Painter 1993, 161.

[162] Marshall 2004, 524.

[163] So Greeven 1931, 205.

[164] Cf. the realised aspects of John's eschatology (5:21, 24; 11:25; 12:31).

[165] Cf. Charlesworth argues that John's dualism is functional and not absolute. Charlesworth 1968–69, 389–418.

pray-er in unity with Jesus or part of the world.[166] This is so because being a pray-er is being in union with Jesus and God, and leads to the right kind of fruits. Not to pray is to "not remain" in Jesus and the group of his followers. To John the ideal in prayer is unity with Christ, a situation which Jesus accomplishes in his deeds of salvation. In the Synoptics the piety is set on a forward track towards an eschatological ideal (cf. Sermon on the Mount Mt 6:1–7:11). In John an ideal is already realised, and the challenge is to not depart from it in a backward regression (15:4 "remain in me"). The result of the two ways of constructing the ideal is maybe not too different—if the Johannine mode is thought to lead the audience to repentance.[167]

Description of the Ideal Pray-er

The prayer-teaching of John is not primarily a description of a pattern of words to be uttered (as the Our Father) or an attitude (for instance humility) that needs to be maintained in approaching God. It does include some words to be used; more specifically the address of the 'Father' in the 'name of Jesus,' and the petition "Glorify your name" (12:28). What more should be prayed for is only arrived at through a process of inference. There is no mention of prayer-requests for daily life issues, apart from a customary blessing of meals (6:11). As Jesus is working through the pray-er, it is prayers in line with Jesus' ministry which are called for by his disciples. The whole narrative of Jesus' life and death is made the pattern for the disciples and their prayers. Jesus revealed his relationship to the Father, and in doing so enabled a community of followers to participate in it. In this context the prayer for the extension of the community is a continuation of Jesus' own work. (15:8, 16; 17:20–26). The ideal pray-er can be summed up in two points: unity and glorification, discussed in the two following paragraphs.[168]

In John, prayer is uttered on account of Jesus' acts of salvation. These acts are understood as expressions of his relationship with the Father. Prayer has its basis in the unity of Jesus and the Father. Unity is basic to Johannine Christology (10:30; 17:11). Jesus reveals this unity to his followers, and extends this unity to them. Although Jesus is in unity with

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[166] The result must be that 20:31, the expressed intention of John, must be read as "continue to believe." Subj. pres. πιστεύητε not sub. aor. πιστεύσητε.

[167] Cf. Zizioulas 2006, 4.

[168] On a historical note, the very strong emphasis on unity could point to a tension within the Johannine community that needs to be addressed.

the Father he still prays, expressing the relationship in words.[169] Into this relationship Jesus includes his followers (partly through his prayers for them). They have been placed *in* him, and are in unity with him and the Father. They can themselves approach the Father, from within the position of unity and love (16:23–24). The kinship and friendship language is extended to the disciples. In this light the prayers of Jesus' followers are acts in which they both express and maintain their unity with him and the Father. However, John argues that God works when they pray, and not only in response to their prayer. The revelation given by Jesus, and the disciples' unity with him, imply that God works on all levels of prayer. He works to bring the disciples to prayer, and at the same time provides for the prayers' acceptance through Jesus. In the end, he himself answers their prayers. The outcome is that prayer can be seen as a gift of unity in John.

If unity is the basis of prayer, glory is its goal.[170] When the disciples remain in Jesus they bear fruit and, thereby, bring glory to the Father. Prayer is portrayed as a part of this process. The result is that the disciples fulfil Jesus' central goal as expressed in 12:27–28 and 17:1, 4. Through the disciples' prayers, Jesus works to complete his glorification of the Father. It is therefore not a question of doing certain acts before God, but of actively accepting the works of Jesus. To John prayer is a form of response to a prior address. Asking God therefore becomes a doxological act. To pray allows Jesus to bring glory to the Father. The active agent is in the end God himself, who brings glory to his name (12:27–28).

Some Further Anthropological Reflections

John works with a strong anthtropological dualism. To him Jesus brings about a new way of relating to God, and therefore of being human.[171] The followers of Jesus have a new form of relationship to God, one of unity (20:17).[172] Although this new relation is brought about by God, through Jesus, it is not automatically or universally distributed. The Christological

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[169] Prayer is here seen as basic to the character of Jesus in John. Contra Ostmeyer who seems to argue that it is primarily on account of the disciples that Jesus prays in John. Ostmeyer 2006, 348.

[170] What goes into bringing the unity about is here presupposed: God's election, saving acts etc.

[171] John is here comparable to Paul: "His theological understanding of Christ opens to him the possibility of a new understanding of human, and especially of Christian, existence as a whole." Barrett 1978, 99.

[172] Stibbe 2006, 183.

constitution of anthropology could at first sight be thought to be a form of universalism (3:16; 12:31–32). Yet, here the Johannine dualism avoids conclusions. The disciples are given a task in prayer towards the world, which in turn must cease being the world. John here seems to be working with a form of provisional life. The "world" exists provisionally. Jesus has overcome the world (16:33), which needs to change. God loves the world (3:16), but the love can remain one-sided. The new relationship into which the disciples are continually called is opened by Jesus, and needs to be entered and maintained. In John this is used as a presupposition of the communication. The Gospel challenges the audience to remain in Christ.[173] The followers of Jesus are "taken out of the world" (15:19; 17:15). God is the active agent in their salvation. They are given to Jesus (6:23; 17:2), and are "drawn" by the Father (6:44). Still, they face the danger of disestablishing the unity. In prayer it is maintained.

In John, humans do not exist in themselves but only in relation to Jesus. John does not have an anthropology as such, it is rather encompassed by the Christology. Humans are defined out of the relationship to Jesus, or out of their lack thereof. The relational mode of constructing personhood is applied also to Jesus who is portrayed only in the reciprocity with the Father. As humans are construed in relational terms they are by necessity open characters. They exist in a shared narrative which is open to the future.[174] John's Gospel is wholly Christocentric, which in this context means equally Theocentric.[175] This means that the interpersonal relationships in question are not of the human kind. The relationship to God is asymmetrical in the ontological sense, and because of that, able to bring life to humans. The follower of Jesus only exists as a function of the prior reality of God. In John humans are thought to be included into a prior reciprocal relationship between Jesus and the Father. The disciples'

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[173] John is different from Luke-Acts which uses two narratives to describe the consequences of the Christ-event. Cullmann 1976, 14. John addresses both in the same narrative. The suggestions of Martyn and Smith, however, take this observation too far. Smith 1976, 55–56; Martyn 1979, 129.

[174] The disciples cannot be thought of as static characters born from above who merely display the nature they always had. Contra Trumbower 1992, 140. True transformation is envisaged. So Keck 1996, 274–288; Koester 2006, 416. John 1:12 and 3:3, 5 argue that humans *become* children of God, not that they *are* that already.

[175] The topic of John is God. Cf. Semeia 85; Olsson 1999, 143; Meye Thompson 2001. It is a "βιός πατρός" Stibbe 2006, 170. Jesus reveals the Father. So Loader 1992, 226; Stibbe 2006. To Barrett "the Gospel is in the fullest sense of the term a *theo*logical work." Barrett 1978, 97. Likewise Barrett 1976, 361–376.

description as a gift from God to Jesus further establishes this aspect. They are now born from above to share in divine life (17:3).

To John, God is the prior reality, and all interaction with him is an answer to being addressed. God's creation and the gift of life are basic presuppositions of the Gospel (1:1–4). The inference is that in any circumstance addressing God is an act of responding to him. John states this explicitly in the description of prayer as bringing glory to God. It is an answer which willingly returns the address with praise. The very act of prayer and the mention of love mean that the unity envisaged is not of a monistic kind. God addresses humans from without, and they respond to him finding their existence as they answer in dialogue. The revelation of God in Jesus does not explain his "being" as such but the relationship now open to humans. God is both revealed and hidden at the same time. John's presentation of Jesus' revelation is thought to bring about a relationship to a person, not information in the strict sense of the term. The result is a tension between knowing God and not knowing God in a dynamic dialogue built on faith. The distance implied by prayer is basic to the unity in question, not opposed to it.[176] Prayer is not uttered to overcome disunity; it is the constitution and expression of the unity.

[176] Distance is necessary for understanding, not opposed to it. The alternative would be a monistic reduction into sameness.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

This conclusion explores what picture of the ideal pray-er emerges when the four Gospels are read together. Here the emphasis will explicitly be on theological issues. This is not intended as a simple harmonisation of the four different spiritualities of the Gospels. Their distinctive presentations of piety stand for themselves and are presented in the conclusions to the respective chapters. The conclusion to each exegetical chapter is in itself a contribution to the theological study of the Gospels. The Gospels present four different calls to respond to Jesus, each with its own "temperament".[1] The early Church for some reason decided, or came to accept, that no harmonisation could carry the weight of the story.[2] Still, a literary approach which investigates how the scenes of a narrative continually qualify and reinterpret each other can also be applied to the four canonical Gospels as a body of texts. The NT canon implies that the texts are to be read together as a whole. For the implied audience the compilation is part of what makes the texts function in a religious setting.[3] On the narrative level, the result is that the figure of Jesus cannot be grasped fully and remains a perpetual challenge to the reader.[4] For the implied audience of the Gospels the differences of the texts add up to create a complex description of Jesus.[5]

This concluding chapter will discuss the *construction* (6.1) and *description* (6.2) of the ideal pray-er in the four canonical Gospels. In the description of the ideals, I will also indicate a number of anthropological insights

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[1] In the Gospels are found "four invitations that complement and correct each other." D'Angelo 1985, 211.

[2] See, though, the harmonising tendencies of some parts of the manuscript tradition. Cf. also Tatian's *Diatessaron*, which was used in some Syriac speaking churches until the fifth century. For Justin Martyr's harmonising quotes of the Gospels see Bellinzoni 1967; Munier 2006, 77–81. Following modern source criticism Matthew and Luke could be seen as harmonisations of Mark and other material (Q, etc.).

[3] As noted in the chapter on John, displacement and distortion create meaning in poetry. Riffaterre 1978.

[4] The four Gospels "intensify and complicate" the mystery of Jesus. Barton 2001, 182.

[5] Historical criticism, on the other hand, largely read the texts against each other in an attempt to produce a simpler description.

gained in the exegesis. The last section (6.3) will then complete the discussion with some concluding reflections. The distinction between the construction and the description of an ideal pray-er is not always easy to make. This is the case because in this religious discourse form is not easy to separate from content, as is clear in the two concluding discussions of this chapter. In one sense the discussion on the description of ideals picks up conceptually where the discussion on the construction of ideals ends. In the process of analysing the construction of an ideal, its contours become clearer. Such an approach also enables discussions of how the content engages the audience. Therefore, it is only with a proper description of form that it is possible to speak of content.

The Construction of the Ideal Pray-er in the Gospels

The strategies for the construction of the ideal pray-er will here be recapitulated in brief. These are not thought of as distinct and self-contained strategies. To the contrary, they flow into each other as various indications of how a proper response to the character of Jesus is elicited. The theme of prayer is related to the particular emphases of the Gospels and these combinations result in different nuances. Still, the Gospels share a number of important building blocks. As noted in the introduction, these include: a) teaching by Jesus, b) paradigmatic and unique aspects of the character of Jesus, c) ideals from the Old Testament, d) play on pre-knowledge, e) narrative progression, f) characterisation, and g) eschatology.

In all the Gospels Jesus is portrayed teaching on prayer (point a: teaching by Jesus). Arguably, there is a drive to trace the piety of the community directly to explicit teaching by Jesus.[6] In Matthew it is evident that prayer is the heart of the longest and most important teaching discourse (Mt 5:1–7:29). As shown in the exegesis the Our Father functions as the generative nucleus of the whole teaching section (cf. exegesis of Mt 5–7). This prayer also has a central role in Luke (Lk 11:2–4). In all the Synoptics Jesus instructs his disciples on prayer in Gethsemane (Mk 14:38 and parallels). In addition, a number of parables on prayer are unique to Luke (11:5–8; 18:1–14). In the Synoptics the cleansing of the Temple is also connected to prayer-teaching (Mk 11:22–25; Mt 21:12–22). The teaching is used to indicate the correct response to the newness of Jesus, and that which

[6] "The life of prayer, therefore, proved to be a link of living continuity between the religion of Jesus and that of the early Christians." Bockmuehl 1994, 144.

he accomplishes. In John the material on prayer which directly concerns the disciples is found in the farewell discourse. Maybe 'teaching' is not an appropriate term in this context. However, it is still presented as Jesus' instruction on how to live after he has left. That this teaching applies to Jesus' followers, the insiders of the narrative, is clear in all four Gospels. In all the Gospels it is presented in the context of "private" instructions to the disciples (Mt 6:1; 11:25; Lk 10:21; Jn 13–17; cf. also the Marcan use of irony), and depends conceptually on the work of Jesus. The teaching of Jesus should be read in parallel to the preaching and the narrative as a whole. The "kerygmatic" nature of this discourse means that the communication is not felicitous if the claims of the narrative are not appropriated. In the Gospels the language of prayer cannot be thought to refer without the self-involvement of the audience. Such an observation leads naturally into the next point.

One of the main aims of the Gospel narratives is to relate the audience correctly to the character of Jesus. As noted throughout, the relation can be divided into the way the audience is called to respond to both the paradigmatic and the unique aspects of Jesus' character (point b: paradigmatic and unique aspects of the character of Jesus). This basic goal is accomplished with strategies that appeal to the audience in different ways. It is in constructing a pattern of appropriate responses to Jesus that the texts can be thought to present 'ideals'. In the NT the ideals cannot be abstracted from the narratives about Jesus. In what follows, the paradigmatic and unique aspects of Jesus' character will be discussed in one paragraph each.

The paradigmatic aspects of Jesus' character cannot be separated from the teaching he reveals. The life of Jesus functions as teaching, just as much as the more explicit paraenetic discourses. In the Gospels Jesus is at times presented as an example of prayer. He is portrayed in constant communion with the Father, and that relationship is understood to be what directs his ministry. This is obvious in the Synoptics which often refer to Jesus' habit of withdrawing in order to pray. In John this is not as explicit, but still evident (11:22, 41–42). Jesus is in unity with the Father, but still expresses himself in verbal prayer. Luke emphasises this paradigmatic function of Jesus' character in the parallels between Jesus' prayers and those of his followers in Acts (Lk 3:21–22//Acts 1:14; 2:1–4, Lk 6:12–13//Acts 1:24–26; 13:2–3, Lk 23:34//Acts 7:60).[7] Moreover, there is also a more general

[7] Cf. Feldkämper 1978, 336.

example of Jesus' paradigmatic character evident in the call to be obedient and faithful to God. Jesus is used as an example of how to live and die in faithful obedience to God (cf. especially the cross-bearing speeches Mt 16:24–25; Mk 8:34–38; Lk 9:23–27; cf. also Jn 12:24). The prayers of Jesus sustain him and also lead him to the cross (in Gethsemane). To pray like Jesus is to serve God in the right manner. As seen in the exegesis this can be conceived of as an application of the logic of the cross to the follower of Jesus.

In the Gospels, Jesus' unique relationship to the Father is the basis on which all other relations are developed. One function of the prayer material is to display Jesus' communion with the Father, and his role as unique Intercessor (most explicit in Jn 17). Jesus never prays *with* the disciples in the Gospels, rather he is at times shown praying *for* them (Lk 24:50; Jn 17).[8] True there is the cry at the cross in Mark which in a sense is an association with the disciples, but it is more of a description of Jesus' saving acts than an example of prayer. Because Jesus has a unique relationship to God he can also uniquely reveal the Father. This is also how some of the prayer-texts are used (cf. Mt 11:25 Lk 10:21–22, Jn 17). Moreover, it can be observed that Jesus also directs salvation history in prayer (Mt 14:22–23; Lk 22:31–32). This uniqueness of Jesus is most pointedly expressed in the worship he receives, primarily after the resurrection (Mt 28:17; Lk 24:52; cf. also Mt 18:20). Nowhere in the Gospels is there any explicit mention of prayers addressed to Jesus. However, a number of passages hint at such a practice (cf. especially Mt 8:8, 25; 14:30; 15:22; 17:15; 20:30–33). In the Synoptics Jesus' name is mentioned in connection with exorcisms and healings (Mk 9:38–39; Lk 10:17). In John the prayer "in Jesus' name" shows his unique place in the piety of his followers (14:13). Such passages suggest that a prayer to Jesus can be presupposed in the texts in question (in agreement with Acts 7:59; 2 Cor 12:8–9; 1 Thess 3:11–13; 2 Thess 2:16–17; 3:5; Rev 22:20).[9] Altogether, this presentation of Jesus' uniqueness can be thought to provide the basis for the disciples' new relation to God. The new relation, and new form of prayer, is thought to have its origin in Jesus' unique filial relationship with the Father.[10]

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[8] One qualification is the note "when they had sung the hymn," which includes Jesus in a Paschal celebration in Mk 14:26; Mt 26:30.

[9] Cf. Hurtado 2003, 139, 391.

[10] "Jesus had a distinctiveness in his relation to God, in which nevertheless his disciples could participate." Dunn 1975, 38. "When Jesus called God 'Father' in his prayer he drew mankind into the mystery of his personal relationship with God." Hamman 1971, 92.

The four canonical Gospels use various ideals gathered from the OT in the construction of their piety (point c: ideals from the Old Testament). This is certainly the case with the whole framework, or discourse, within which the Gospels were constructed.[11] As noted in the introduction a basic Jewish piety is presupposed for all the four Gospels (1.3.2). There are a number of explicit references to such practices in the texts. At a number of places Jesus and other characters follow contemporary Jewish prayer customs (prayer before meals Mk 6:41; 8:6; 14:22–23 with parallels, adherence to corporate prayer Mt 6:9; 18:19–20; Lk 1:10; 11:2, connecting prayer to the Temple Mt 21:12–22; Mk 11:12–25; Lk 1:10; 2:36–38; 18:9–14; 19:46; 24:53). Besides this it can also be observed that the Gospels relate Jesus to a number of OT ideal figures like Moses, Elijah, and a more generalised prophetic type in their Christologies. Although these characters are used to develop the Christology, they also reveal what form of piety is deemed important in the Tradition.

In all the Synoptics the prayer passages show a high proportion of psalmic language (see sections on Prayer to Jesus? Mt 11:25–27; 26:36–46; 27:46; Mk 14:32–42; Lk 1:46–55, 67–79; 2:29–32; 10:21–22; 18:9–14; 23:46). It is the OT psalms (LXX) which have furnished both the general theology and much of the language of the prayers in the Gospels, including John.[12] This is seen in the use of such central psalmic aspects as praise and lament in the presentation of prayer in the Gospels.[13] This is the case both for Jesus' prayers and those of other characters (cf. Lk 1–2 and the 'prayers' directed to Jesus). Jesus is also himself shown singing the appropriate Psalms at the Passover meal (Mt 26:30; Mk 14:26; the second part of the *Hallel*, Ps 116–118). In Gethsemane and at the last cry of Jesus, as rendered by Mark and Matthew, Jesus uses psalmic language. It is interesting to note that at places certain parts of the tradition are emphasised over other parts. See for instance Lk 18:9–14 which uses Ps 51 as a contrast to Ps 17:3–5; 26.

Common to all the four Gospels is the conceptual dependence on OT texts that speaks of future fulfilment and change. In the prayer material this is seen in the uses made of Is 29, Jer 31:29–34, Ez 36:25–27, and

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[11] "In many ways, the forms and traditions of Israelite and Jewish prayer that precede the career of Jesus and the formation of the early Christian community carry forward into the New Testament." Miller 1994, 304.

[12] So Moyise and Menken 2004, 2. In most aspects I follow the description of the theology of the Psalms found in Kraus 1986. Kraus describes God and his Character and then the resultant existence of Israel under his rule.

[13] For a concise theological description of the prayer-language of the Psalms cf. Miller 1994, 97–134, 178–232.

Joel 2:28–32 (see for instance Mark 6:41 and 8:6, Lk 1:67–79: 9:16; 22:15–20; Jn 4:19–26). Fulfilment is possible because God is faithful to his covenant. This is a thought that undergirds all of the prayer material in the Gospels. It is the basic background against which faith and prayer must be understood. God has called his people and engaged in continued communication with them, now most conclusively in Jesus.

The Temple is central in the Christology of all the Gospels, and also in the construction of the ideal pray-er. In Luke, Jesus and his followers have their origin in the faithful worship of Israel, in the Temple (Lk 1–2). More than that, the Gospel also ends on the continuous worship of the community in the Temple (24:53). To all the Synoptics the new community embodies the true intention of the Temple ("a house of prayer" Mt 21:12–22; Mk 11:17; Lk 19:46). In their prayers the community continues the tradition, and constitutes the people of God. In all the Gospels Temple metaphors are used for Jesus (cf. Mt 12:6; Mk 14:58; 15:38; 15:29; Jn 2:19; cf. also Acts 7:48; 17:24). John is more abstract in applying themes normally associated with the Temple directly to Jesus (as in Jn 17).[14] Common to all the Gospels is the thought that the community at prayer is one of the clearest connections to the Temple and the people of Israel.[15] Jesus is the highpoint of Tradition, and his followers continue the ideal piety found in it. The Gospels actively constructs a piety with a Christocentric focus with the help of a basic Jewish piety.[16]

The Gospels work with a certain level of pre-knowledge. This pre-knowledge is alluded to and used in the communication in different ways (point d: play on pre-knowledge). This is shown for instance in the use of various titles for Jesus, in the introductions, in the use of irony and symbolism and in unexplained practices. This mode of constructing an ideal pray-er is more expressed in Mark and John but is also evident in the other Gospels. In all Gospels the audience knows more than the characters of the narrative. Much of their communication is accomplished through implicit comment and constructions. Through this construction the actual audience is called to continue to respond to Jesus. They know when the disciples do something wrong, or misunderstand. The effect

[14] A use found implicitly also in Mt 18:19–20.

[15] Other groups within Judaism also discussed their relation to the temple. Cf. 2 Baruch, 4 Ezra, *Apoc. Ab*, the early sections of the Mishna; Josephus; and Qumran texts. Cf. Elior 1993–94, 27.

[16] Holmås has rightly emphasised the apologetic and legitimating functions of such a construction. Holmås 2011.

is to solidify the positive knowledge that the audience possesses. This is further helped by the inclusion of various groups which are negatively characterised. The main thrust of this argument is directed at parts of the Jewish leadership, especially in religious matters. It is Jesus and his followers who display true piety, not those commonly thought to do so (like the Pharisees).[17] John is more cosmological in the use of a group of Jesus' followers simply opposed to the 'world', which seems to include all else. All the Gospels can therefore be thought to strengthen a praxis which is presupposed by the narratives. The implied audience knows that the story of Jesus relates humanity to God, and that they are in the right concerning this. Through the texts they are strengthened in prayer, and in the devotion they show to Jesus. It is also in this context that imagery and symbols make sense.[18]

The implied audience must be thought to be in a privileged position vis-à-vis the narratives. Still, the narratives employ a progression in the construction of an ideal pray-er (point e: narrative progression). Upon re-reading (re-hearing) the texts can be thought to retain the dynamic character of narratives. In one sense the initiates are made to go through the emotions upon each re-reading (re-hearing). The texts remain perpetual challenges to the readers through revealing distance as well as knowledge. In all the Gospels the cross and resurrection are high points which create a new eschatological reality. The progress towards this pivot is more marked in Mark and Luke than in Matthew where there are more hints throughout the narrative of Jesus' exalted status (cf. for instance 1:23; 18:20), or in John where a heavenly perspective often comes into view. Luke makes the most out of the progression to the cross. In that Gospel the disciples are gradually inducted into Jesus' form of piety. This leads the audience to associate with them and appropriate Jesus' form of piety. However, this is also the case in the other Gospels, the difference being the strategy by which this is pursued. In Mark, for instance the audience is pushed into not doing like the disciples. In all the Gospels the implied audience is incorporated into Jesus' relationship to God as the narrative unfolds. The narrative form of the description of this relationship also contributes to its dialogical nature. The putative relationship between God and the audience is evolving.

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[17] The evangelists clearly draws lines towards competing forms of piety in such constructions. In Mark this is only the result of the narrative on the level of the implied audience.

[18] To Culpepper, symbols "often span the gap between knowledge, or sensible reality, and mystery." Culpepper 1983, 183. Cf. likewise DeConick 2006, 7.

The Gospels employ various tools of characterisation in their construction of a continuum of responses to Jesus and his work (point f: characterisation).[19] As regards prayer other characters are used to highlight the uniqueness of Jesus and, in some cases, also the right form of prayer (as in Lk 1–2).[20] Most important in this regard is the group of disciples, which is used differently in the four Gospels. After an initial positive presentation, Mark paints a realistic or even negative picture of the disciples. They do not understand Jesus, are repeatedly reprimanded, and are aids in pushing the audience towards Jesus. At the same time they can be seen as "negative" examples in being accepted despite their failures. Luke on the other hand presents a picture of the disciples as genuinely growing in discipleship. Despite leaving Jesus in the passion narrative, they are reinstated afterwards to proceed in completing what Jesus has called them to (in Acts). The result is that they act as typical examples of how to follow Jesus. John is more similar to Mark than to Luke in the emphasis on the otherness of Jesus and the frequent misunderstandings of the disciples. At the same time the disciples and the audience are united with Jesus. In Matthew the picture is also mixed, but overall more like Luke. The disciples go through various stages in their understanding but end in worshipping Jesus (worshipping Jesus must be seen as an ideal if any). In all Gospels the followers of Jesus are thought to go through a process of change.[21] This is not as clear in Mark where the narrative ends with their confusion. However, even Mark must be thought to present the life, death and resurrection of Jesus as effecting a decisive change in the lives of his followers, despite themselves. After the cross the disciples, and implied audience, are in a different position and in that sense changed.[22] Then they can pray with faith.

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[19] The contrastive construction of the ideal represents a counterbalancing of perspectives with a "very definite hierarchy of perspectives" whose "qualities and defects . . . are clearly graded." Iser 1978, 100.

[20] The characterisation is very different from that of the modern novel. Berlin 1984, 34. Biblical characters are constructed with "sparse, even rudimentary means." Alter 1981, 114. In the Synoptics, "Menschen werden im narrativen Zusamenhang stets als Vertreter eines Typos, mit einem Characterzug, durch eine Handlung oder mit einem Merkmal dargestellt. Jede Differenzierung und Individualisierung fehlt." Frevel and Wischmeyer 2003, 83. So also Porter Abbot 2002, 129.

[21] It has been suggested that a potential to change is a distinguishing mark of biblical characters. So Scholes and Kellog 1966, 165. Likewise Arp 1998, 80; Resseguie 2005, 126.

[22] Scholes and Kellogg make a strict division between Greek and Hebrew narratives in this respect. The Greek model shows the true nature of characters, in the Hebrew model the characters become something. Scholes and Kellogg 1966, 123.

All the canonical Gospels draw on the logic of a basic eschatological outlook in their construction of an ideal pray-er (point g: eschatology). Especially in Luke prayer is presented as the correct way to meet the present eschatological moment.[23] Prayer ensures that the disciples do not lose heart, but remain faithful until they see God's final act of salvation (the coming of the Son of Man cf. Lk 5:33; 18:1–14; 21:34). Also in the other Gospels there are calls to watch and pray, and remain awake in prayer (especially in the Gethsemane scene, Mt 26:36–46; Mk 14:32–42).[24] Prayer is a way to avoid temptation, as is also clear from the Our Father (Mt 6:13; Lk 11:4). This gives a strengthened emphasis to the temptation scenes as paradigmatic for the audience (Mt 4:1–11; Mk 1:12–13; Lk 4:1–13). In all the Synoptics prayer is appropriate as a way to meet the present night and progressing to the light of day (cf. the material in Mt 24:42–43; 25:13; Mk 13:32–37). John does not use these calls to avoid temptation and stay alert (see though Rev 3:2; 16:15). Still, even in John there is a future eschatology in the context of his prayer-teaching (cf. the conclusion to John).[25] There are numerous references to elements of salvation that await completion (future resurrection Jn 5:28–29; 6:39, 40, 44, 54; judgment Jn 3:16; 36; 12:48; *Parousia* Jn 14:3; 21:21–23). Prayer as such refers to something which is not realised in the experience of the pray-er. The act of prayer actively pursues that which is asked for, and expects a future answer to the needs brought before God. There are in all four Gospels indications of events which remain to be fulfilled.[26] The result is a picture where salvation is not wholly fulfilled in the present experience of the pray-er. It will be experienced at the return of Jesus, and prayer sustains his followers until that time. In this the Gospels do not bring a complete closure to their narratives. This trait actively draws the audience into their frames of reference. "Evil" persists and must be opposed, with the "tools" presented in the narratives.

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[23] Ott presents good arguments for this but takes it too far in his argument that Luke has changed the immediate eschatological teaching of Mark and Matthew, and with it most of his theology, to accommodate a delayed parousia. Ott 1965, 137–139. Lövestam rightly argues that the call to "be wakefull" is common to all the Synoptics, and that it derives from Jesus' teaching. Lövestam 1963, 134.

[24] To "watch and pray" is necessary in this age of darkness. The result will be entrance into "the light for the righteous in the world to come." This is in agreement with contemporary Jewish sources. Lövestam 1963, 5–7, 24, 78.

[25] So Greeven 1931, 205, 213–215.

[26] "All the Gospels present Jesus in eschatological perspective, and under the strong influence of the view that there is to be a decisive future victory of God's purposes over all evil and all that opposes God's saving design." Hurtado 2003, 268.

The Description of the Ideal Pray-er in the Gospels

This section presents the ideal pray-er in the canonical Gospels. I will present the words to be uttered in prayer and then, in more general terms, indicate what prayer entails in the Gospels. It must be emphasised that it is primarily the narratives which work the discussed ideals in the audience. The ideals constructed by the Gospels are inherent to the narratives in question. A synthesising conclusion with an emphasis on common themes flattens out the distinct form which is inseparable from the message. For instance, in a religious setting the ideal of 'humility' cannot be applied directly to religious life. Only the texts function in this way.[27]

In the conclusion to each exegetical chapter, the conceptual location of prayer within the piety of the Gospel was indicated (Matthew: Theocentricity and appropriate response; Mark: Repentance and faith; Luke: Covenant and salvation; John: Unity and glory). Here I will indicate the picture of the ideal pray-er the Gospels present when read, or heard, together.[28] It bears repeating that the Gospels appear to presuppose a praxis of piety which is not directly presented in the texts themselves.[29] In Mark and John this is especially evident; not much is included by way of explicit words to be used in prayer. Yet, it is certain that prayer is conceived of as verbal, and not silent.[30] Implicit information on what is prayed is found in the hints at Jewish practices and psalmic language. There are also hints in the implicit references to prayers to Jesus, and devotion to him (cf. the exegetical discussions of prayers to Jesus, and Mt 28:17; Lk 24:52).[31] The implicit references to petitions directed to Jesus indicate that adverse everyday experiences are appropriate subjects of prayer in the Gospels.

In a canonical context the Our Father is *the* expression of prayer as taught by the Gospels. This basic prayer taught by Jesus resounds also in John and the Gethsemane scenes in the Synoptics (cf. Mt 26:42 "Your will be done").[32] The prayer teaching of the Gospel is compressed in this one

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[27] "The western scientific community has seemed particularly prone to believing that a systematic description of phenomena *is* reality itself." Johnson 1985, 113.

[28] Read together by an "implied reader" of the canon, that is, sympathetically and repeatedly.

[29] Moreover, Bradshaw warns against the assumption that liturgical legislation equals practice. Bradshaw 2002, 19.

[30] In Judaism and Christianity, silent prayer was a later development which is first visible in Philo and some of the early church fathers influenced by Neo-Platonism. So van der Horst 1994, 1–25.

[31] Cf. Glöckner 1983; Hurtado 2003, 283–348.

[32] Cf. exegesis of Jn 17 for details.

prayer with its wide-ranging subjects. At the head of this prayer is the prayer-address used by Jesus—'Father' (discussed further under point c below). Although the petitions fit into a broad first century Jewish setting, the prayer soon came to be associated with Jesus. As such it functioned as an identity creating part of the tradition.[33] In that sense it is specifically 'Christian', connected to Jesus the Christ. Both Matthew and John describe prayer in Jesus' name (Mt 18:19–20; Jn 14:13–14). However, it is not clear whether this is intended as a verbal part of the prayers or as a reference to its conceptual basis. The Gospels further indicate that the extension of the community is an important subject of prayer (Mt 9:38; Lk 10:2; Jn 15:7, 16; 16:23–27).

The subject of prayer can be studied to describe the texts' picture of God.[34] Prayer in the early Christian tradition presupposes that God has a general openness towards men, that he can be approached verbally, that the prayers are heard, that God works in the world in answer to prayer.[35] At the same time, I have shown in the exegesis that prayer also reveals much about how the other conversation partner is understood. In the Gospels prayer is a function of the picture presented of God.[36] Prayer in this tradition constructs a particular picture of humanity.[37] In what follows I will indicate aspects that the Gospels share in this regard. The understanding of prayer in the four Gospels can be schematised in the following observations: a) prayer is a major way to respond to the Gospel in faith, b) prayer is offered on account of the salvific works of Jesus, c) prayers are to address God as "Father", d) prayer is a sharing in God's work, e) prayer is seen as a major part of the connection to the people of Israel and the Temple, f) prayer is an expression of incompleteness and dependence, and finally, following from the previous point, g) prayer is an expression of a basic eschatological outlook.[38]

The four canonical Gospels are all constructed so as to elicit the response of prayer in the audience (point a). This is a response to God who is thought to extend a personal address. The ideals of the Gospels do not present an ethical agenda separate from the religious claims. The

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[33] Ostmeyer 2004, 324–325.

[34] NT prayer "presupposes a particular view of God." Cullmann 1995, 6.

[35] Cf. Löhr 2003, 526.

[36] Clements-Jewery 2005, 137.

[37] The linguistic constitution of prayer makes it "particular" by definition. "Religion is like language itself, which is realized only in different tongues." Ricoeur 2000, 130.

[38] Note that the letters do not correspond to those in the above discussion of the *construction* of an ideal.

portrayed relationship to God the Father, and Jesus his Son, constitute the ethics of the Gospels. In that sense the ideals are constructed as an effect of the perceived relationship to Jesus. The Gospels speak of God in personal terms; God is presented as a personal character it is necessary to have a relation to. The God of the Gospels is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, personal characters in a narrative.[39] The texts do not call the audience to be humble in a general sense; they call them to relate to God in a particular manner. In the Gospels prayer is not an expression of an abstract ideal, for instance the (inner) state of humility; to pray as Jesus teaches *is* humility. In the introduction the task set up was to describe how the Gospels construct a piety and function as "manuals" on how to pray. In that sense "prayer" is taken for granted, which is also warranted by the direct teaching on the matter. In the texts God appears as the sender of Jesus and as the originator of the revelation set forth. In that sense the texts express God's address in Jesus Christ.[40] In the Gospels the address of God is prior to prayer. The initiative lies with God who is presented as actively searching the prayers of humans (He knows the needs of his children, but still requires them to pray. Mt 6:8–9. Cf. Lk 11:1–13; Jn 15:1–10). The right response to the texts and therefore to God is to ask for that which he gives. Therefore, the ethical agenda depends on God's answer to prayer. In the Gospels it is understood to be dependent on God's acts. In prayer the followers of Jesus answer God's call with faith or trust (πίστις).

Being created in the image of God is a basic presupposition which the NT continues from the OT.[41] All humans are thought to have some form of relation to God as Creator. The argument made by the Gospels is that all do not have the *right* kind of relationship. The followers of Jesus are presented as being in a position qualitatively different from outsiders. Prayer is seen as an important part of this situation as it receives God's gifts. To the Gospels it makes a difference whether the audience prays or not. To be a pray-er is different than being a non-pray-er. The problems of humanity are defined through the solution presented. Jesus is the Saviour, without him salvation is not administered. The call for an explicit

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[39] God is defined "less by his metaphysical and moral character than by his historical relations." Niebuhr 1989, 23.

[40] On this cf. Moody Smith 2000, 3–20.

[41] The two basic themes of a Christian anthropology are the *imago dei* and sin. Koch *TRE* 22:547, 561. In a NT perspective we should add the salvific acts of Jesus as equally basic. Those not responding at present could in the Gospels be thought to have a provisional ontology. Cf. John's language of having or not having life (Jn 1:4, 15, 16, 36 etc.).

response means that the status of those not responding remains problematic. The Gospels see response to God's call, partly through prayer, as required in the process of salvation.

In the Gospels Jesus' salvific works in ministry, death and resurrection are thought to bring about a new relation to God.[42] This 'Christ event' is the basis on which prayer is offered (point b).[43] In broad terms it is Jesus who is presented as God's address. This address is expressed in Jesus' works which are done for the benefit of his followers (Mt 20:28; 26:28; Mk 10:45; 14:24; Lk 22:20). The result is that it is the acts of God, in Jesus, which are thought of as the basis on which prayer is offered. Moreover, prayer is possible on account of the revelation Jesus gives his followers, which is also understood as a salvific act.[44] Jesus reveals his Father, his own relationship to the Father, and also the way to pray. The resulting ideals are not understood as requirements the pray-ers must fulfil before approaching God.[45] In the Gospels, prayer is not based on the righteousness or *charis* (χάρις) of the pray-er.[46] The result is to put emphasis on the powerful acts of God, and the surety of the community's relation to him. The anthropology appears as an addition to the theology.

In the Gospels the life of Jesus is part of his salvific activity.[47] This comes to expression in the way there appears to be a call to imitate Jesus (cf. the discussion on imitation in the introduction). At various places efforts are also made to connect the praxis of the community to the teaching and examples of Jesus. The disciples are presented as continuing Jesus' ministry. Jesus' ministry can in turn be understood as an expression of the ideal which is constituted by God the Father. This is the ideal that the disciples are called to conform to (cf. for instance Mt 5:48; 6:9–11). At times this is argued for on the basis of kinship.[48] The follower of Jesus must act in

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42 "Die auferstehung Jesu Christi ist das Grunddatum neutestamentlicher Anthropologie." Frevel and Wischmeyer 2003, 110.

43 "Christology is the beginning and the end of anthropology, and this anthropology in its most radical realization, namely Christology, is in all eternity theology." Rahner 1960, 151. From a different angle Karl Barth's Anthropology also builds on the Christology. Cf. Koch *TRE* 22:537–538.

44 For this aspect in Luke cf. Feldkämper 1978, 204.

45 On the strict obligations of the pray-er in Greek religion cf. Pulleyn 1998, 12–13, 37, 93.

46 It could possibly be argued that it is based on the righteousness or *charis* (χάρις) of Jesus himself.

47 Cf. Feldkämper's discussion of this in Luke. Feldkämper 1978.

48 "Nachahmung Gottes ist in der griechischen Philosophie etwas rein Naturhaftes, während sie im Christentum ohne die Offenbarung Gottes und ohne die Erlösung der menschlichen Natur nicht zu denken ist." Heitmann 1940, 108.

a particular manner because he or she is a child of the Father.[49] In the NT, 'Godlikeness' is a gift of divine grace given through the Spirit and adoption.[50] Prayer is a sure way to pursue this reality, which is construed as a process. In the Gospels the audience change as they follow Jesus as God's children.[51] Prayer takes a central place in this dynamic. Bockmuehl has argued that "the single most important expression of both participation in Christ and imitation of Christ was prayer."[52]

The new relation to God discussed above comes to its most poignant expression in the prayer-address of God as "Father" (point c). This single word is used to describe Jesus' unique communion with God and also the new relationships which he reveals and enables. The thought of the fatherhood of God can be found also in the OT. However, the Gospels connect it to the sonship of Jesus and the disciples' inclusion in this sonship. The address is therefore Christologically charged. All the Gospels set forth this address as an ideal petition which the audience is to use. Mark and John do this indirectly, whilst Matthew and Luke are explicit about it. To Matthew and Luke this address is the basis of the direct speech of the ideal pray-er in the Our Father (Mt 6:9–11; Lk 11:2–4). In Mark the ideal pray-er (the implied audience) prays the words 'Abba' together with Jesus (Mk 14:36). In John the disciples are not taught to use the address 'Father' directly. Still, this is implied in the prayer teaching which calls them to pray to the Father (Jn 15:16; 16:23). God is not the Father only of Jesus, but in a derived way also of his followers (Jn 20:17). With this address, the relationship to God is conceived of in personal and intimate categories. In the Gospels, God can only be engaged on self-involving terms.

In the Gospels the pray-er is thought of as a summoned self, responding to the voice of the Father.[53] In prayer the follower of Jesus is in a sense revealed to him or herself.[54] Prayer acts as a manifestation of the self to

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[49] Heitmann 1940, 8.

[50] Heitmann 1940, 107.

[51] "Die Nachahmung Gottes ergibt sich aus der Gotteskindschaft der Glaubenden, an die die Christi Vollkommenheitsgesetz anknüpft, sowie aus der anerschaffenen Gottebenbildlichkeit und der Berufung durch den heiligen Gott." Heitmann 1940, 18, 106.

[52] Bockmuehl 1994, 126.

[53] "The calling of God precedes—it hypostasizes the personal otherness of each one of us, our rational capacity to be related to him and come to know him." Yannaras 2005, 88.

[54] "In and through prayer, man comes to discover in a very simple and yet profound way his own unique subjectivity: In prayer the human 'I' more easily perceives the depth of what it means to be a person." John Paul II 1994 (# 4).

the pray-er.[55] The way this is done is through the calling of the Father, and its answer. Such an understanding of personal interaction presupposes 'distance' as necessary for responding in faith or love.[56] The pray-er is addressed and returns the gift of the address in a response. In the Gospels this is thought of not only as a matter of asking for benefits and receiving them, but as a continuous "personal" interaction. In this discourse God is conceived of as a personal Saviour and Father, not an absolute Being.[57] In the Gospels there is no such thing as a transcendental subject, or 'Being' in an abstract sense. If humans were thought to possess an abstract 'being', as in Descartes and Leibniz after him, prayer would be an expression of interiority that needs to be exteriorised.[58] In this model God is the infinite expression of finite human 'substance', placed at the head of a hierarchy.[59] In this form of philosophy the notion of God is derived from metaphysics by necessity.[60] In contrast, the Gospels work with a thought of humanity as defined from without, constituted by the address of God, *and* the response to it.[61] In this dialogical model, life, love, salvation or any other gift of God mentioned in the Gospels, are the basis of the human person.

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[55] Chrétien 2000, 153. "The first function speech performs in prayer is therefore a self-manifestation of self to self through the other, and where the presence of self to the other and of the other to self cannot be separated." Chrétien 2000, 154.

[56] Cf. Marion 1991, 104, 130, 169.

[57] "The visage of being that shows itself in war is fixed in the concept of totality, which dominates Western philosophy." Levinas 1969, 21. "Western Philosophy has most often been an ontology: a reduction of the other to the same by interposition of a middle and neutral term that ensures the comprehension of being." Levinas 1969, 43. Pigalev argues that in Western metaphysics there is a "monopoly of the Absolute" which by necessity ends in a "principle of monologue." Pigalev 1997, 121. In such a model the Absolute is seen as the source of emanations on a deductional pattern, with no interpersonal will to revelation. The result of such a monologue is to leave the "Other" invalidated. Pigalev 1997, 123.

[58] Hemming 2001, 446.

[59] Nietzsche did away with God and kept the subject, with the result of the later becoming "self-founding". So Hemming 2001, 450.

[60] "'God' as ultimate foundation, with Leibniz; 'God' as 'God of morality' with Kant, Fichte, and Nietzsche; 'God' finally and above all as *causa sui* with Descartes, Spinoza and in the end all of metaphysics." Marion 1991, 64.

[61] Despite his emphasis on Being as "being-with-one-another" (*Miteinandersein*) Heidegger still falls short of providing a true alternative to totalising ontological constructions of anthropology. Heidegger 1996, 142. To him transcendence is basic to 'being' in that self and world belong together in a single Being (*Dasein*). Yet, such an approach does not allow for persons, and by necessity leads to nihilism. Cf. the intricate and obscure, yet convincing, critiques by Levinas 1969, 33–105; Marion 1991, 53–107. Similar arguments have been mounted by Yannaras 2005. (originally published 1967).

In all the Gospels prayer is a sharing in God's work (point d).[62] In the Synoptics the disciples are called to follow Jesus in a ministry driven by continuous prayer. Jesus actively pursues God's plan in Gethsemane, which is also presented as an example to his followers. They too are to pursue God's will. To Matthew the ethical demands are realisable only in prayer (cf. exegesis of Mt 6). In John Jesus' followers are called to remain in him and be fruitful in prayer. Common to both Mark and John is the thought of prayer as personal relationship, not only a spiritual discipline.[63] Fruitfulness comes as an answer to prayer, maintaining God as the active agent. Therefore, prayer is thought to change the world in accordance with God's will.[64] Prayer is concerned with God's creative work, also in and through humans. This is especially the case with prayers for the extension of the community (Mt 6:9–11; 9:38; Lk 10:2; 11:2–4; Jn 14:12–14; 15:7–8; 17:20–26). Here there is some significant convergence between the Synoptics and John. John emphasises the sharing in God's work in his repeated focus on unity with Christ which leads to fruitfulness (in prayer). The aspect of serving God is basic to the prayer-teaching found in all the Gospels.[65] However, in the Gospels this service is somehow interconnected with the work of God in and through the pray-er.

The preceding paragraph raises the question of whether prayer is thought to be initiated and actually expressed by God in the pray-er.[66] In John this is quite clear as "apart from me you can do nothing" (15:5). There the disciples are presented as being part of the inner relationship between Jesus and the Father. In the Synoptics it is clear that the audience is presented with an option between rejecting or accepting Jesus and God. Accepting God through responding to Jesus makes the pray-er a part of God's works of salvation, with its "cosmological" implications (in Mk this is especially expressed in the victory over evil, in Lk in the

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[62] This thought is basic in the creation account (Gen 1:26–28; 2:5, 15, 18–20) and the repeated descriptions of covenants in the OT.

[63] This is in line with the anthropomorphic picture of God in the early narratives of the OT.

[64] Such a conclusion is tangential to the thought that the prayers of God's people are in fact part of what sustains the world. "The world exists by virtue of the Qaddish recited after the Aggada." *Soṭa* 49a. Cf. Mt 5:13.

[65] Kümmel has argued that the basic aspect of NT anthropology is the presentation of humans as God's slaves (δοῦλος). Kümmel 1948. Cf. Mt 18:26; 20:27; 24:45; Mk 10:44; Lk 12:43; Rom 1:1; Gal 1:10; Tit 1:1. This must be balanced by such aspects as friendship and sonship.

[66] A classical *ordo salutis* problem. "One can be turned to God only in praying, and one can pray only by being turned toward God. Only a leap makes us enter into this circle." Chrétien 2000, 157.

participation in the plan of salvation). The teaching on prayer presents the petitions, and the needs they express, as God's revelation communicated to the pray-er. The result is a circle in which God is thought of as the one who both reveals the proper subject of prayer and receives the prayers (cf. for instance the construction in Mt 6:8–9, 32). Luke is quite explicit on the Holy Spirit's role in bringing forth "prophetic speech." This role can be extended also to prayer which is an expression of God's will. The Holy Spirit is thought to speak in the pray-er to the Father, through the work of the Son (cf. Lk 1:67; 2:25; 6:12–13 with Acts 1:2; Lk 10:21). At the same time, prayer is presented as collaboration with God as it pursues and actively takes part in this interaction. One result is to portray humans with a particular teleology.[67] They become agents in God's plan of salvation. God's children do his work, and in doing so they are changed into the image of God (Mt 5:43–48). The dialogical picture presented indicates that prayer is understood as a cooperation between God and the pray-er in all the Gospels.[68]

As argued already, all of the Gospels must be read against a background of Traditional Jewish piety. All of them draw on OT material in the construction of an ideal (point e). The presentation of Jesus as the epitome of the Tradition implies that his followers are its rightful heirs. Those who follow him have understood the OT correctly and are part of a covenant relationship with God. Prayer is seen as the major connection to the Temple.[69] This is not necessarily the second Temple as it functioned prior to its destruction, but the (ideal) Temple as the point of connection between God and his people. There is critique in the Gospels to the effect that this function of the Temple is not being fulfilled. In contrast they argue that Jesus is the point of contact between God and his people. Jesus thus comes to take the place of the Temple.[70] Jesus' followers are fulfilling the intentions of the Temple when they pray as enabled by Jesus (cf. Mk 11:15 par).[71]

The way prayer is constructed through the Jewish tradition presents it as a mediated activity. The Tradition provides the Christian movement with a notion of antiquity, and with definition through differentiation. More

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[67] Cf. Webster 2001, 264–265.

[68] Pascal 2003, 140 (# 533). "God" says Pascal, "established prayer in order to communicate [lend] his creatures the dignity of causality."

[69] Cf. Berger *TRE* 12:53.

[70] For how this is worked out in John cf. Coloe 2001.

[71] In the context of the Temple the Eucharist represents a more complex phenomenon.

than that, the praying followers of Jesus think of themselves as continuing the relation to God enjoyed by their forbearers. The OT background is not only used as a conceptual quarry. It is thought of as a narrative of religious experience which the follower of Jesus is part of. The Psalms and OT prayer-forms remain central in the piety of the followers of Jesus. The Our Father does not replace this basis.[72] The covenant thinking used throughout the prayer-material shows that the community is seen as prior to the existence of the individual (cf. for instance Lk 1–2 or 22:20). In the Gospels prayer is part of a tradition and a people. When the audiences of the Gospels pray, they see themselves as standing in historical continuity with Jesus and Jewish tradition.

The recognition and expression of incompleteness and dependence are central aspects in the teaching on prayer (point f). The Gospels work only with negative ideals to be fulfilled in order for prayer to be answered. In one sense this is an application of the logic of the cross to Jesus' followers (cf. the cross-bearing speeches Mt 16:24–25; Mk 8:34–38; Lk 9:23–27 cf. also Jn 12:24).[73] In addition to his other roles, Jesus is also an example of obedience and sacrifice.[74] This part of his character is consistently connected to discipleship and prayer (cf. especially the Gethsemane scene Mk 14:32–42 and parallels). The ideal pray-er is the one, who like Jesus, does the will of God in humility (cf. "the humble" ταπεινός Lk 1:52; cf. also Mt 11:25// Lk 10:21). To Klaus Berger, a defining trait of New Testament prayer is exactly "self-abasement."[75] God knows all the needs of humans (Mt 6:32), yet they do not receive his gifts if they do not ask. These gifts include even salvation, in so far as prayer is the right answer to God's offer of salvation. Moreover, within the bounds of the narrative even what should be asked for is directed by God. The narratives define the lack and its solution in God, setting the pray-er in a progress towards God and the procurement of his gifts in a situation of dependence.[76]

At a more abstract level it can be observed that incompleteness and dependence presuppose 'hiddenness' and therefore uncertainty on the

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[72] So Bovon 1996, 143.

[73] Martyrdom became an important way in which the early Church understood themselves as participating in Christ. See Acts 5:41; Col 1:24. Cf. Ign. *Rom.* 6:3; *Mart. Pol.* 14:2; Eusebius *Hist. eccl* 5:1:23.

[74] Other traits are, as already argued, unique to him.

[75] Berger 2003, 212.

[76] "The judgement of God that judges me at the same time confirms me." Levinas 1969, 246.

part of the pray-er.[77] The speech-act of prayer is enabled by the silence of God.[78] Belief and trust make sense in a context where the future is not completely settled. Waiting is the second nature of prayer and is necessary for faith to be exercised. This understanding of God's hiddenness rehearses a basic OT picture of God.[79] God is revealed in Jesus and in Jesus' relation to the Father. Yet this revelation is constructed as a personal relation to someone wholly other, it cannot be totalised. It is the narrative of God's acts towards his people which sets the frame for further such acts.[80] In the Gospels God can be approached in the language of prayer; in asking, begging, crying, thanking, and praising him.[81] This is a second person address of personal relationship. The thought that prayer avoids idolatry (cf. Mt 4:1–11) is basic in this respect. In the Gospels prayer is the way to avoid speaking of God outside of a perceived relationship to him. Therefore it avoids idolatry and conceptualisation of God.[82]

The emphasis on incompleteness and dependence, based on the picture of a hidden God, is central in the Gospels' view of humanity. The hiddenness of God also implies that a complete definition of humanity is impossible. The pray-er is constituted by the address of a hidden God and the necessary response to that address.[83] The result is that the basis

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77 In the Gospels, God is the *Deus absconditus* or *Deus semper maior*.

78 Chrétien 2000, 161.

79 As it is described by Terrien 1978; Balentine 1983.

80 "The whole content of the New Testament (and of the Old as well) is God's acting, not his being." Cullmann 1967, 277. In the (Hebrew) Bible a "person's nature is revealed by deeds; action is the implementation of character, and individuals are disclosed through their deeds no less than through their words." Bar-Efrat 1989, 77. Cf. likewise Yannaras 1991, 31.

81 "The gift of the unnameable name through distance implies the Christological truth that God withdraws in his approach and approaches through withdrawal: correlatively, the subjectivity born in relation to that gift undergoes linguistically the Christological trial of a dispossession, death and silence that open to a ressurection in the nonpredicative discourse of praise or prayer." Marion 2001, xxv (translator's introduction).

82 Marion convincingly discusses the "idolatry of concepts" in which God is understood to hold "infinite attributes." Marion 1991, 36. "The proposition 'God is being' itself appears as an idol, because it only returns the aim that, in advance, decides that every possible 'God,' present or absent, in one way or another, has to be." Marion 1991, 44. Likewise Marion 1991, 81–82.

83 This is the problem of Christian particularity. Those not responding at present could in the Gospels be thought to have a form of provisional ontology. Cf. John's language of having or not having life. In theological terms the thought must be that God creates being out of nothing at creation. The defacement of this being necessitates the establishment of a provisional being, which he then works to make permanent.

of the pray-er is in the 'Other'.[84] With a "hidden" God this means that the basis of humanity remains hidden, and in a sense irreducible. In one sense salvation is unrealised. In the gospel humans are defined out of a lack met only by the wholly other. In this sense the form of love propounded by the Gospels presupposes lack and desire.[85] Evil is a present reality. The pray-er must continually pray for forgiveness from sin, self-defining as a sinner. The present experience of the pray-er is one of weakness, or even sacrifice.[86] This sacrificial aspect is shown for instance in the way the pray-er prays for enemies (Mt 5:44). In fact prayer is always in one sense *for* someone else. Whether it be in the straightforward sense of offering petitions for loved ones, or for enemies, or in the sense of praying for God's will to happen with oneself.[87] Praying for bread includes also this aspect of life under God's direct will, as does the blessing at mealtimes. Humans eat because God has ordained it. Just like Jesus sacrificed his will to that of the Father in Gethsemane, so does the ideal pray-er.[88] The Gospels thus conceive of humans according to a kenotic ideal.[89]

Eschatology is basic to the worldview expressed in the Gospels, and prayer is a marker of the kind of eschatology propounded (point g). It is the correct response to the particular situation the audience finds themselves in. This situation appears as one of tension.[90] Eschatology presupposes a negative view of the present. The weakness referred to in the previous paragraph is also evident in the repeated calls to watch and pray in the Synoptics (Mt 26:41; Mk 14:38). The power and salvation of God are not immediately available. However, even if lack is a presupposition of

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[84] With regard to the verbal constitution of experience it can on this account be argued that the NT picture is one where tacit dimensions are subsequent to the word, not prior (Jn 1:1). The mystery, or religious experience, occurs after the word (not before it as an undefined religious phenomenon).

[85] "I feel an absolute need for love that only the other is capable of internally actualizing from his own unique place outside me." Bakhtin quoted in Pigalev 1997, 124.

[86] Such an emphasis on sacrifice goes against any construction of the self as an individual to which sacrifice is an impingement on personhood. This in contrast to Nietzsche who rightly emphasised the sacrificial nature of Christianity, yet rejected it: "The Christian faith from the beginning, is sacrifice: the sacrifice of all freedom, all pride, all self-confidence of spirit; it is at the same time subjection, self-derision, and self-mutilation." Niezsche 2002, 44. (# 46).

[87] So Levinas 1999, 181–182.

[88] Zizioulas 2006, 5.

[89] Zizioulas 2006, 6.

[90] Das Alte Testament "kennt den Menschen in seiner Hoheit und Pracht, aber auch in seinem Leid und seiner Niedrigkeit. Wenn es eine Essenz alttestamentlicher Anthropologie gibt, dann wohl die, dass diese existentielle Spannung das Mensch-Sein ganz und gar ausmacht." Frevel and Wischmeyer 2003, 26.

prayer, it is set to be overcome (cf. Rev 21:4).[91] A future state will reverse the present situation. This is not seen as an abstract state but as events in a narrative where God will save his people.[92] The resurrection must imply that death and suffering are not final, even if they are intrinsic to present experience.[93] The Synoptics and John present the existence of their implied audiences in different ways. In one sense the Synoptics call for a progress towards an ideal, and John for a remaining in ideal unity. Yet, the result for the audience appears to be the same.

In all of the Gospels, prayer is a reaching towards a heavenly reality which, from the vantage point of the pray-er, remains in the future.[94] The future is the decisive element in Christian anthropology.[95] At the same time prayer represents a foretaste of that which it moves towards; one could say a realised eschatology.[96] Prayer sees a part of the heavenly reality in the present experience. It is thought of as an act which will sustain the pray-er until the final end (and the *parousia*). Both John and the Synoptics call for repentance in view of an ideal. The Synoptics call for the pray-er to watch and pray, John for avoidance of the fire through prayer (Mt 26:41; Mk 13:35–37; 14:34, 38; Lk 22:40–46; Jn 15:5; cf. Acts 20:31). Prayer is in turn thought to be answered in help to resist temptation and apostasy. It is included in the progress towards God's final salvation (in both its individual and cosmic senses). On the whole prayer can be seen as a marker of an already-not-yet (*sich realisierende*) eschatology in all the

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[91] Cf. Zizioulas critique of a metaphysics of suffering as evident in Dostoyevsky. Zizioulas 2006, 63.

[92] Aune suggests that the early Christian understanding of the end "consist of narratives rather than doctrines." It belongs to "folk literature." Aune *ABD* 2:597.

[93] "In embracing suffering, love aims at transcending and overcoming—even eliminating—it." Zizioulas 2006, 63.

[94] In contrast to the timelessness of much Western metaphysics it needs to be emphasised that in the Gospels the future is not perceived of as an atemporal state but as real events involving real people. The result of the mentioned timelessness is that this metaphysics "does not know the concrete recipient of its thought." Pigalev 1997, 126. It is basically impersonal.

[95] Cf. Berger: "[F]or Paul, the 'inner person' is not some stable and durable interiority but rather an invisible eschatological identity (2 Cor 4:16)." Berger 2003, 8.

[96] "Thanks" εὐχαριστέω is not used very often for prayer in the Gospels: Once by the scribe (Lk 18:11), once by Jesus acting according to his divinity (Jn 11:41), once by a healed Samaritan ambiguously towards Jesus (Lk 17:16). The major use is that in the "Eucharist" (Mt 26:27, Mk 14:23; Lk 22:19) and feeding miracles. "Thanks" in itself points to something realised. Its absence in the Gospels is suggestive. Among the Synoptics Luke-Acts contains most of the uses of the "praise" (αἶνος, δοξάζω for instance Lk 18:43) which carries similar notions of realised eschatology, pointing to its place in between Matthew and Mark on the one hand and John on the other.

Gospels. More than that, prayer is descriptive of the form of eschatology found in the Gospels. The already-not-yet eschatology is an effect of the centrality of narrative and history in the constitution of the pray-er. The heavenly goal of the prayers is not a move out of history, but a conclusive relation to the God of history. Despite the fact that some elements of the eschatology can be thought to be realised, that does not mean that they are a-temporal. The pray-er lives with hope and an openness towards a future shared with the Father in a personal history based on faith.[97]

Concluding Remarks

In these concluding remarks I will present some further anthropological consequences of the discussions of this chapter. This will be done with reference to a number of aspects discussed in the introduction (chapter 1). It can be observed that the Gospels consist of narrative descriptions of the saving acts of God in Jesus Christ.[98] This salvation is thought to accomplish a new relationship to God. As seen in the exegesis this new relationship is realised though the disciples' association with Jesus, through whom the new relation to God is possible. In various ways the disciples are included in the Son's communion with the Father. Prayer takes a central role in this inclusion. It is conceived of as a participation in Jesus' communion with the Father, and as what properly receives God's gift of salvation.

The initial presupposition that the Gospels communicate primarily to those already initiated into the faith has been found to be coherent. The Gospels are the faith narratives of the community.[99] As such they are descriptive of the religious experiences of those communities. At the same time they enable further religious experiences through providing their linguistic basis.[100] In the chapters on each individual Gospel the prayers have been seen to be a performance of tradition. This performance is part of what keeps the tradition alive. According to the Gospels it even con-

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[97] Wyschogrod describes how the Heideggerian use of "Being" undoes the Biblical picture of a God of history. Wyschogrod 1983,125–172. "Relationship to God requires faith, whereas being is grasped by thought." Wyschogrod 1983, 143. Being "eliminates difference and therefore individuality." Wyschogrod 1983, 146. This is not a natural futurity of Whitehead or de Chardin, but one based on promise. Wyschogrod 1983, 226–227.

[98] Certainly there are other important genres found in the Gospels (like teaching, symbolic discourses, etc.) but the narrative form is constitutive of the canonical Gospels.

[99] Cf. Dunn 2003, 99–136.

[100] Morgan argues that the symbolical realism of the NT lets the audience participate in the reality of God. Morgan 1995, 106.

tinues the saving acts of God in Christ. Prayer continues the narrative of the Gospels in the audiences, on the same level as that encountered in the texts. In that sense prayer is a continual reconfiguration of a personal narrative. In narrative terms, definite closure is not possible for those who are in Christ since death is overcome. The relationship to God the Father is intransitive.[101]

All the Gospels guide the audience into a right response to the narrative. This guidance is in fact part of the substance of the texts.[102] Responding to the narrative is equal to entering into relationship with Jesus and the Father. In so far as the response required is an acceptance of God's work of salvation the ideals set forth in the Gospel are only indirectly ethical. They are descriptive of Jesus, and of his work of salvation. The ethical programs of the Gospels, in all their aspects, depend on the saving power of God. Human 'being' is only conceivable in continual communion with God. Prayer in the manner enabled, taught, and exemplified by Jesus is the way leading to 'life'. It includes the pray-er in the sphere of God's loving action, receiving his gifts. In all the Gospels the follower of Jesus is given personhood in the interaction with God. Prayer is not an expression stemming from a prior constant essence. In the Gospels ideals cannot govern personhood, only relating can.[103]

The response of prayer is perceived of as a continual dialogue with God. In that sense prayer is a process of exploring the self. It implies being changed into the likeness of God revealed in Jesus Christ (see the exegesis of Lk 9:28; but also Mt 5:44 and Lk 6:28; cf. Rom 8:29). Jesus is explicitly identified as the image of God in John 14:9, "The one who has seen me . . . (Jn 1:18; 6:46; 10:30; cf. also Col 1:15; 2 Cor 4:4).[104] In the other Gospels similar thoughts are found in the implicit ascription of divinity to Jesus. As has been seen in the exegesis the Gospels use Jesus as a unique and paradigmatic character at the same time. Jesus is divine and the saviour of his followers. From this role the evangelists derive a pattern of right relationship to God, and to others. Jesus *is* the ideal of the Gospels.

As regards prayer it is the relationship between the Father and the Son which is ideal. This ideal is not external to the persons in question. Their loving interaction is a pattern for Jesus' followers. It is not a set of moral

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[101] The other side of this is that those without a relation to God through Christ have transitive or provisional being, in the end limited by death.

[102] It is preaching, or "kerygmatic."

[103] Cf. Zizioulas 1985, 45–46.

[104] Cf. also the Adam-Christ theology of Paul. Cf. Barrett 1962. Wright 1983, 359–389.

aspirations.[105] The persons in relationship *constitute* the ideal. The audience is called to participate in this relationship, and change in accordance with the pattern provided by Jesus. Prayer is a major way in which the character of Jesus is appropriated by the audience. In prayer they go the way of the cross, like he did. This includes the sacrificial love towards others that he displayed (Mt 5:44).[106]

Prayer as Jesus taught and enabled means that the praying audience is changed according to the pattern provided by Jesus.[107] This also means that they are changed into the image of God in the process (cf. on this 2 Cor 3:18; Eph 4:23–24; Col 3:10). The result is to conceive of humans as agents involved in a never-ending progress in the dialogue with God.[108] Humans are made in the image of God (Gen 1:26–27; 5:1; 9:6; cf. 1 Cor 11:7; Jam 3:9; cf. Acts 17:28).[109] Yet, that image is not fully realised. It is revealed in Jesus, and is an eschatological reality. God's acts of salvation, which include prayer, are set to restore the divine image in humanity.[110] The dialogue is based on the call of God which requires an active response. Yet this active response is in a sense also a passive acceptance of God's works of salvation.

The image of God is fulfilled in the communion with him.[111] In the Gospels the existence of humans is inherently relational.[112] The thought of an individual existing in him- or herself is foreign to the Gospels.[113] The

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[105] The ideal is not functional in the sense of being tied to an act humans perform, for instance dominion over creation.

[106] In that sense the dignity of those not responding to Jesus is maintained. All have the potential for communion with God.

[107] The argument here comes close to an Irenaean anthropology, where humans are thought to be fashioned by God and must remain pliable. To Ireneaus humans are children who grow unto maturity. Cf. Behr 2000, 116–128. Cf. Irenaeus *Haer.* 4:38:1.

[108] Robert Alter has argued that "[e]verything in the world of biblical narrative ultimately gravitates toward dialogue." Alter 1981, 182.

[109] Cf. εἰκών in the OT, von Rad TDNT 2:390–392.

[110] The eschatology is akin to protology.

[111] It is in a sense an anthropology from above. As is also argued by Zizioulas 2006, 171.

[112] "True knowledge is not a knowledge of the nature of things, but of how they are connected within the communion event." Zizioulas 1985, 106. Likewise Bakhtin: "To be means to communicate." Bakhtin 1984, 287.

[113] The substantive view of the image of God in mankind runs into problems if it is thought to be a possession of the individual. What faculty within humans is to be seen as the divine image? If it is a potential for communion with God there is something to this view (Eccl 3:11). The Greeks would answer "reason" (νοῦς), but this use is very rare, if found at all, in the Bible. As seen in the exegesis the Gospels do not construct a strict physical/spiritual (or mind-body) dichotomy. The pray-er exists in a world where the physical and non-physical exist in close interaction. Cf. for instance 1 Cor 15:44. Cf. further Cullmann 1960; Douglas 1966; Hill 1984, 100–102; Martin 1995.

relationship to God is not analogical to everyday human relations, it is asymmetrical. God is not presented as an absolute or infinite version of humanity, but is wholly Other. Created humans exist apart from God, who created them out of nothing. This distance is a presupposition for the language of 'gifts' and 'love'. The Father continues his creating causation of love in the bestowing of 'salvation from sin', 'faith', 'life' etc., through Jesus. In this sense, "otherness is *constitutive* of unity, and not consequent upon it."[114] Prayer is a sacrifice that returns the gift to the Other, and in that gains personhood for the pray-er. In the Gospels it is in the active interaction with God that the person as such is realised.[115] In this ultimate reality is attributed to individual persons. The irreducibility and otherness of the praying person are maintained and constructed in the acts of communion. In the Gospels, God is thought to be present in order to give himself in Jesus Christ; humans on their part exist in receiving themselves.

[114] Zizioulas 2006, 5.

[115] Barth 1960, 196; Berkouwer 1962, 87, 179, 197. Cf. Barth's notion of the image of God in Genesis as social; it implies a relational capacity. Barth 1958, 184.

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